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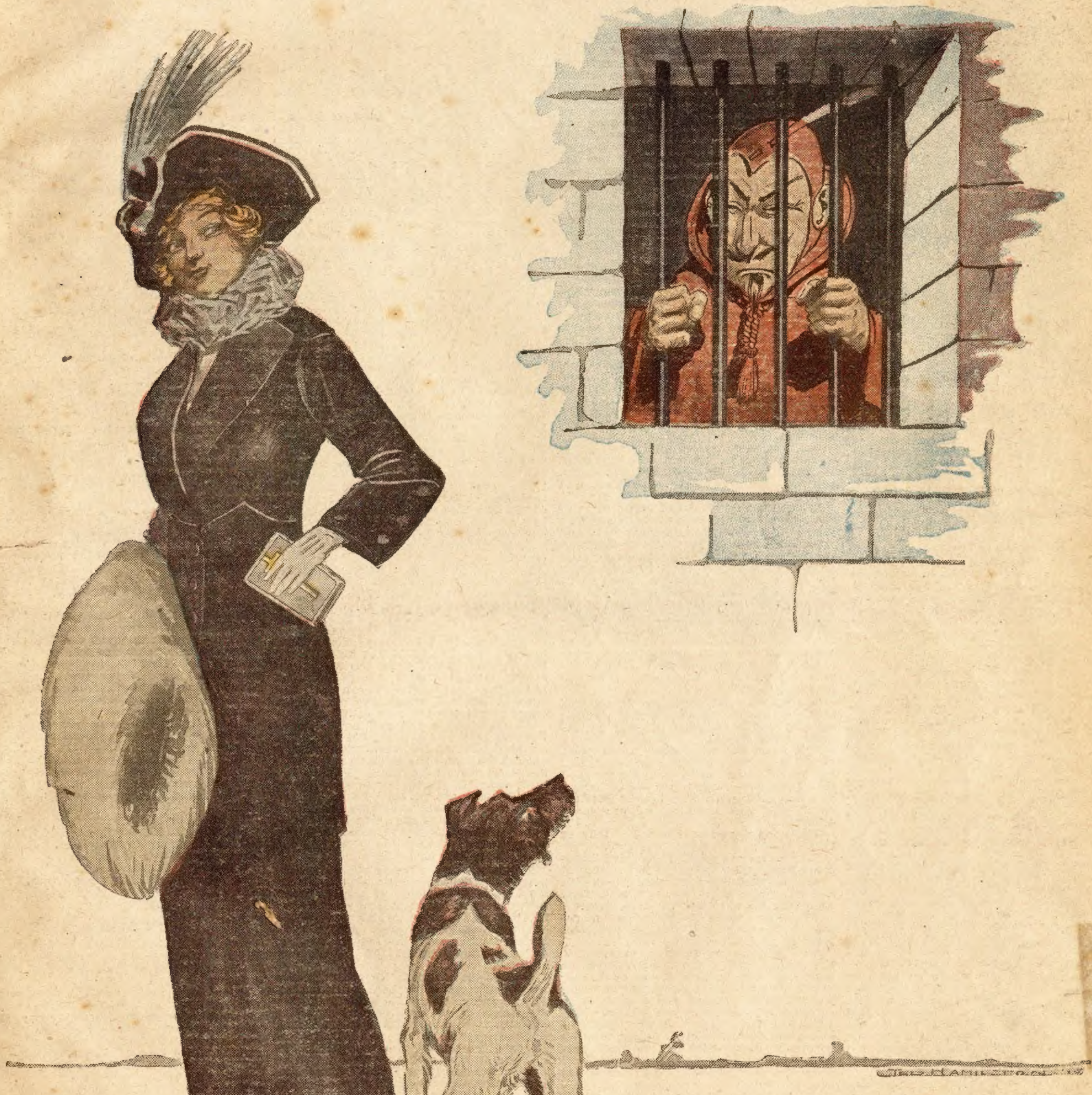
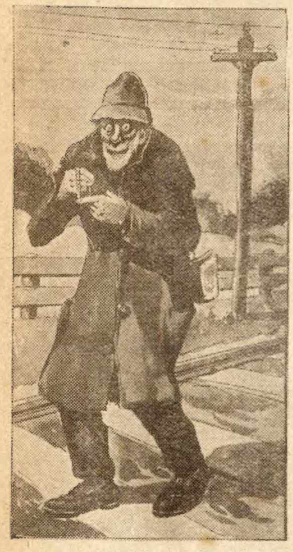


Lent--"In for Forty Days"

Lonesome Tom's Triumph

By Hapsburg Liebe



"A diamond necklace!"

A TRAMP, confirmed and of twenty years' duration, with an ambition! But perhaps it wasn't an ambition—perhaps it was only an overmastering desire, or an abnormal obsession, or the big symptom of a peculiar insanity; but, whatever it was, he had it, and it was chronic. Even a phrenologist might have found a prominence on one portion of his cranium. His appearance, of course, was hardly worth the mentioning. He had a pair of sleepy blue eyes, and a straggling, yellowish beard; he wore a coat that had been an overcoat, a vest that had been an army blouse, no shirt, trousers and shoes of the common fashion of trampdom.

But to the—well, whatever it was. After all, vengeance was the predominating thing in it. When he was a boy, his father had sold the very finest farm in his county and moved to a nearby town, where they had been welcomed into the best society long enough to be fleeced. After ten years of unavailing struggling, the father had died very poor, and soon afterward the mother had gone, too, leaving their one child to be cuffed about like any ordinary street arab. Then Tom Linebaugh had become a tramp. He went back to the little city every three or four years, always in the winter, for the little city was in the South—and he didn't know why he went back, for they kicked him out of the city limits each time! And Lonesome Tom—a few other tramps who knew him called him that because he wasn't very social—would have sold the immortal part of him to the Ruler of the oldtime fiery Pit to get even with the people of Johnsville.

Lonesome Tom was again on his way to Johnsville. In fact, he lacked but twenty-five miles of being there. His blue eyes were glittering now. He forgot to shiver at the biting wind. His dirty fists were clenched in his pockets. His strung-up tomato-can banged his right hip with unwonted rapidity as his footsteps trod the gravel beside the tracks and made a noise like the noise a mule makes when chewing hard corn. Then his fiery eyes caught sight of a sudden sparkle in the gravel just ahead. He stooped and picked up a diamond necklace worth many thousands of dollars! He thought of the special that had passed him, going toward Johnsville, five minutes before; that was a part of the answer.

Vengeance was in his hands at last! For money would buy vengeance. He would go to a big city, sell one of the very smallest of the diamonds, dress himself neatly with the proceeds, then sell the other stones and go to hated Johnsville. He would work out the rest of it more leisurely. Then he realized that the necklace would be missed, and that they would search his clothing if they found him—and it was plain to him that they would find him. So Lonesome Tom put the valuable thing in his tomato-can, pressed the tin together at the top, crossed a fence, walked across a meadow, and threw his find into the middle of a thick briar copse.

Then he went back to the railroad, and set out for a village he had passed through two hours before; he would wait there until the excitement died down. The wind was higher, and it was now in his face. He turned his coat collar up as high as it would go, and pulled his shaggy, yellowish head downward for the sake of warmth.

* * * * *

He came to so gradually that he was hardly surprised to find himself lying in a bed in the private car of a railroad president. Above him burned a bright light; about him stood two big men with pointed beards, a young woman prettier than the beauties of art calendars, and a black man with a white towel on one arm. His nose seemed unnaturally white; he knew it had been washed; he lifted one hand, and saw that it too was clean. He put the hand to his head, and felt a bandage there. The doctor interfered:

"Careful, my man! Rest easy now."

"Please pellucidate," growled Lonesome Tom, his gaze resting not upon the doctor's face, but upon the young woman's eyes.

"Rest easy now," repeated the physician. "You'll learn all about it later."

"I'll learn all about it right now," declared the tramp, with as much vehemence as his weakened condition would permit. For to his mind, these people belonged to snobs, and they were his natural enemies. "I ain't never done nothin' to be a subject for vivisection; I don't owe the bloody human race nothin'. What did you do with my arm and my brains?"

The doctor smiled a patronizing smile. It was evident that to him a tramp was a tramp.

But the young woman, of course, was a much gentler person. She stepped to the side of the bed, and sat down. She leaned toward Lonesome Tom, and said in a low, sweet tone:

"It was all my fault. I had charge of the railway gasoline car which ran you down. The wind was in your face, and you didn't hear us coming—and it was on a sharp curve. We were moving fast, even though we were all looking along the side of the track for a diamond necklace I must have dropped out of the car window. Yes, it was all my fault. We are now in a little place called Bosdale, and there is no hospital here. But we'll take care of you, because it was all my fault that you were hurt. One of your arms is fractured, and your head was—was considerably damaged. How do you feel now?"

The blue eyes of Lonesome Tom stared straight into the blue eyes of the young woman, and there was a sneer in the gaze of the tramp.

"Oh, I feel fine, of course!" he snapped. "Lyin' here with a feeler smashed, and my brains oozin' out by the barrelful—I feel fine! Why didn't you watch where you was goin' with your bloody gasoline car?" He was thinking of vengeance deferred.

The young woman dropped a tear or two. "I—I'm so sorry!" she said.

"Cry baby! Cry baby!" taunted Lonesome Tom. "Cry baby! Snob! Snob!"

He congratulated himself upon his shrewdness in hiding the necklace. Then he closed his eyes and went to sleep.

When he awoke the following morning, the doctor and the railroad president were standing beside his bed.

"It's your move, Doc," he sneered to the physician. "I don't want to catch you around here any more, or I may break a slat for you—y'understand that Doc? You've done all you can do; catch a freight. I don't like you a bloody bit."

Nevertheless, the doctor puttered about over him for some fifteen minutes before he left. The big railroad man still stood looking down upon him, and there was a queer twinkle in the deeply set gray eyes.

"Well," jabbed the tramp, "spit it out. Tell it. Throw it from you. Get it out o' your system. What is it? I didn't ask for your bloody hospitality, did I?"

Now Thornton Blair was not accustomed to being addressed thus. But a look of forbearance, and not a look of anger, settled down over his usually austere features.

"We've got to wait here two days," he said. "I am to be joined here by other railroad men, and we are to decide whether the biggest railroad in the South is to run through this town, Bosdale, or through Johnsville, a little city eighteen miles south of here. When my friends have joined me, we will move on to Johnsville, where we will leave you at a hospital."

"A hospital in Johnsville!" Lonesome Tom's face showed a great bitterness. Take him to a hospital in hated Johnsville! He continued, "I'd rather die than to go to a hospital in that bloody town! That was where——"

Then he told Thornton Blair all about his hatred for the little city—everything. And Blair appeared to understand perfectly. Then an idea of great brilliance entered the aching head of Lonesome Tom.

"Listen here," he said. "The railroad goin' through Johnsville would make it—would be the makin' of Johnsville, wouldn't it?"

"Certainly," agreed Thornton Blair.

"Well, what's your opinion about the railroad goin' that way?" Lonesome Tom pursued.

"We've decided once on Bosdale, and once on Johnsville," said Blair. "This time will tell."

"You lost a fine diamond necklace, didn't you?" the tramp growled.

"Very fine, indeed!" exclaimed the magnate. "It belonged to my dead wife. We have searched everywhere, and have never found it."

"I've got it," said Lonesome Tom, his blue eyes shining.

"You have!" Blair exclaimed excitedly. "Where is it? Where is it?"

"You don't find out yet, not on your bloody life," and the tramp smiled grimly. "You'll get the necklace after certain things happen. Otherwise all o' the torture in Hades wouldn't get it out o' me. If you'll turn the big new railroad through Bosdale instead o' Johnsville, and dress me up after a King Edward fashion, and take me to Johnsville in this private car, and introduce me to the citizens o' the place as Vice-President Thomas Linebaugh, and let me tell 'em why they don't get the big new railroad, and then make out a paper to me readin', 'When the such-and-such railroad runs through Johnsville, this State, I hereby, of my own free will, bind myself to pay to Thomas Linebaugh the sum o' one hundred thousand dollars——' then, and only then, will you get the bloody necklace!"

Thornton Blair was pale. "Describe the necklace," he demanded.

Lonesome Tom described it fully.

"Are you aware of the fact that I can send you to prison for this?" muttered Blair.

"Yes," admitted Lonesome Tom. "But that won't get the necklace for you. I'd like to do a little time, anyway. And about that paper, we'll have to have disinterested witnesses—we can get 'em here in Bosdale, where the people are crazy to get the big new railroad."

All the threats and grilling of which the magnate was capable did not make an impression on Lonesome Tom. Neither did the tears and the pleadings of Blair's daughter prevail upon him. He was determined. He was going to wreak vengeance upon the people who had cuffed him about on their streets as a boy, and kicked him out of the town limits as a man. Weak as water in other lines, the tramp was a veritable Gibraltar of strength in this one.

The next day the tramp stole from the private car, and went to the office of the most influential lawyer in Bosdale. This lawyer, naturally, wanted to work to the interest of his town, which was to his own betterment, of course. A little later Lonesome Tom and the lawyer went to interview the president of the big new railroad.

Several days later, Thornton Blair's private car pulled up before the station at Johnsville. The citizens of that little city were expecting it, expecting to be told that they would get the railroad, and were gathered together, all of them loudly cheering. Then Thornton Blair and a well-dressed man with his golden beard trimmed King Edward fashion, a high silk hat in one hand, came out upon the rear platform.

"Gentlemen," began Thornton Blair, "I will introduce to you the present vice-president of the B. & N. W. Railway, Mr. Thomas K. Linebaugh, whom some of you no doubt remember, as this is his home town."

A strange silence settled down upon the populace. All too well they remembered Thomas K. Linebaugh.

"You haven't forgotten, have you, Johnsville," boomed the voice of Lonesome Tom, "about fleecin' my father and sendin' him down into the grave of a pauper? Nor have you forgotten about turnin' my mother out of your society doin's after she become poor. Nor have you forgotten about cuffin' me about your streets as a boy, or out of your city as a man. You don't get the B. & N. W. Railroad, and I am goin' to pit my enormous wealth and my great influence against the job o' gettin' this one railroad out o' here. Now take that, you dirty snobs!"

Lonesome Tom went back into the car. His triumph was complete.

TO LEDGER READERS

Be sure and read **"FRONTIVARD, THE TERRIBLE; or, BROTHERS OF THE RED,"** and **"AN ENGINEER'S NERVE; or, BURT CORBIN'S TEST,"** in this issue; also, you will find two good short stories **"LONESOME TOM'S TRIUMPH,"** and **"A WONDERFUL DISCOVERY."** We think they are funny; see what you think of them. Next week's leader will be **"THE PRINCESS ZITHENZA; or, THE SOUL'S CALL."** It is a strange and fascinating story. Also, there will appear another thrilling story of **"FRONTIVARD, THE TERRIBLE,"** and several good short stories. If you cannot get the Ledger regularly from our agents, we would be glad to have you send in a subscription. The Ledger is the greatest story paper in America. This is the general verdict. Come in with us and see.

* * *

Kissed Him.

A man and a woman were walking along a country road on their way to call on a neighbor. Presently they heard a honk back of them and quickly stepped aside to let an automobile pass. As they were getting the dust out of their throats and clothing, the woman spoke.

"Henry," she said, "why don't you ride in a thing like that instead of walking as you do?"

"Because, Mary," he replied, with no sign of shame, "I haven't money enough to pay the cost of it."

"Why haven't you the money, Henry?" she persisted.

"Because, Mary, I have not been able to get it since I married you."

If there were any insinuation in that, she ignored it.

"Well, why didn't you get it before you married me?" she asked.

"Because, Mary, there were reasons."

"Could you have got it?"

"I am quite sure that I could have done so."

"Then, in Heaven's name, Henry, why didn't you?"

"Because, Mary, I preferred you, as poor as we both were, to a millionaire lady who wanted me in spite of my poverty."

She stopped dusting herself and looked at him.

"Henry," she said severely, "I knew you were foolish about me, but I didn't think you were that foolish!" And she kissed him, dust and all, right there in the public highway.—Judge.

* * *

The Boss.

A youth about to embark on the sea of matrimony went to his father and said:

"Father, who should be boss, I or my wife?"

The old man smiled and said: "Here are a hundred hens and a team of horses. Hitch up the horses, put the hens into the wagon, and wherever you find a man and his wife dwelling, stop and inquire who is the boss. Wherever you find a woman running things, leave a hen. If you come to a place where a man is in control, give him one of the horses."

After ninety-nine hens had been disposed of, he came to a house and made the usual inquiry.

"I'm boss of this farm," said the man. So the wife was called, and she affirmed her husband's assertion.

"Take which horse you want," said the youth.

"I'll take the bay."

But the wife did not like the bay horse, and said things to her man. He returned and said to the youth:

"I believe I'll take the gray."

"Not much," said the young man, "you get a hen."

* * *

Deceitful.

This was told by Senator James P. Clark, of Arkansas, in substantiation of the saying that appearances are often deceiving.

Some time since two farmers were talking crops over a rail fence, when they saw a tramp coming down the road with a shovel on his shoulder. Both gave one look and began to gasp. They couldn't have been more amazed if they had seen a locomotive crawling across a field of plowed ground.

"Look here, Willie," exclaimed one of the farmers, when the tramp came abreast of them, "do you mean to say that you are actually going to get down to work and do a piece of diggin'?"

"Not on your life!" promptly responded the hobo, with charming frankness.

"Not surprised to hear it," was the smiling response of the farmer; "but what are ye goin' ter do with that shovel?"

"Use it for a frying pan," answered the tramp. "I am a trifle shy on cookin' utensils."

* * *

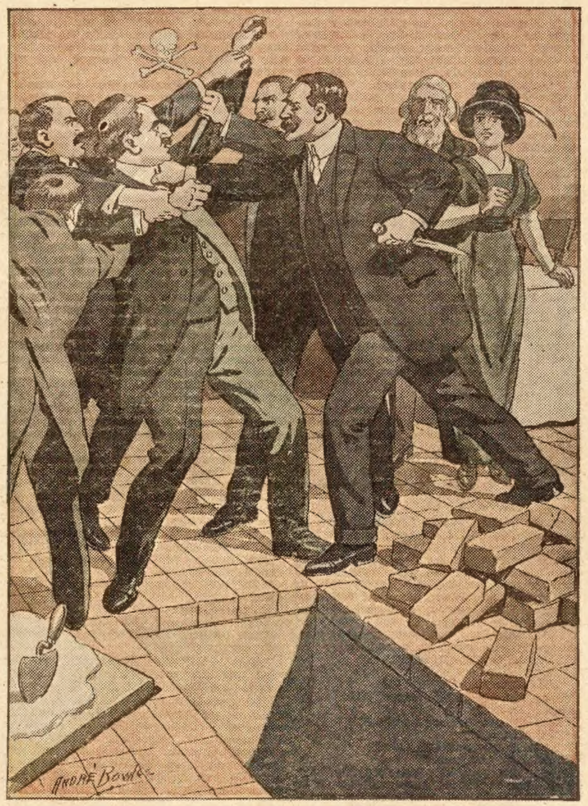
Changed His Mind.

"Do you think the motor-car has come to stay?" asked one man of his neighbor.

"Well," replied the other, "there was one out in front of my house today which I thought had; but they got a horse after a while and towed it home."

Frontivard, the Terrible

Or, Brothers of the Red - By Stephen Gaillard



"He lies! He is not the Grand Master!"

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[Author's Note:—With the final defeat and elimination of the Brothers of the Red through the unceasing efforts of that modern band of vigilantes known as the Invisible Tribunal, there passed into oblivion the most dangerous and dreaded criminal organization that ever defied the forces of law and order. Above the ordinary level of the powers that prey, the Brothers constituted a powerful, murderous, far-reaching society against whose activities the ordinary machinery of the law proved ineffectual. To cope successfully with these wily foes of civilization, arose the league known as the Invisible Tribunal, the membership of which consisted of men drawn from all walks of life, but selected individually for courage, determination, and fidelity to the oaths they swore for the protection of society by fair means or foul. From the memoirs of their most formidable agent, Cesare Frontivard, and his comrade, Edmund Reverdy, is taken the strange record of events herein set forth.]

IN THEIR LAIR.

"SIGNOR, I have come." The voice of the speaker was rich and musical, evidently the Italian in which she spoke was her native tongue.

"Well!" muttered the great detective, Frontivard, standing in the shadow of the arcade, to Reverdy at his side, "the acquaintance of every man may be useful to us. If it were not for our disreputable friend Perugi, we should not be able to understand a word they are saying."

"It is fortunate for your father that you have come, Signora," answered the stranger, also speaking Italian.

"Where is my father?"

"He is some distance from here; we will have to take a taxi."

"Dare I trust myself alone with you?"

"Signora, do not speak so loud! Your father is in the hands of men whose safety depends upon concealment. I alone can take you to him. I alone can save him. Make your choice. Trust in me and all will be well; allow a foolish aversion to sway you, and your father's blood be upon your head."

"I will go, but if you betray me——"

"Cab!" said the stranger.

A taxi was standing near the curb. "Here you are!" shouted the driver.

"To White City," said the stranger, as he entered after the lady. He had not observed the two figures standing in the shadow of the arcade behind him who had overheard the whole conversation.

Frontivard and Reverdy looked at each other for an instant. "There is our quarry," said Frontivard. "Come on!"

"You do not suppose he is really going to White City, do you?" said Reverdy.

"No; but I am going to find out where he is going. It is an opportunity which chance has thrown in our way, and I mean to see it through."

"I'm with you," said Reverdy.

Frontivard stepped to the curb, and his eye caught the eye of a chauffeur who immediately brought his machine opposite to where they were standing.

"Trail," said Frontivard, as he and Reverdy entered.

The alliance between Frontivard and Reverdy was of ancient date. It might have been typified as the alliance between the Gray Wolf and the Grizzly. It was just nine o'clock in the evening when the two automobiles turned into 63d street going west from Cottage Grove avenue, in Chicago. The one in front was an ordinary taxi, the other a black touring car, of ordinary type, with nothing in its appearance to distinguish it from dozens of others of its class. In the touring car were Frontivard and Reverdy, so unobtrusive among the cushions of the tonneau that a casual observer might have supposed the car was empty. The two machines whirled westward in 63d to State street, and turned south in that thoroughfare, where the touring car dropped so far behind that it might have been supposed by any one in the secret that the two secret agents had given over the chase. Far southward the two machines sped; and then suddenly the taxi turned westward again and disappeared.

"Full speed ahead," said Frontivard to the driver of the touring car.

Upon the instant the big machine leaped forward like a thing of life. A moment later it had reached the corner where the taxi had disappeared. At the corner stood a solitary house, beyond it the street stretched away across the commons between rows of willows; it was devoid of buildings of any kind. About two blocks ahead they could see the rear light of the taxi. Still further, at a great distance, they could see a solitary light which seemed to come from a building of some kind. The chauffeur slowed down his machine at the corner and followed leisurely in the wake of the taxi. Presently, from the direction of the light they had seen far ahead, the strains of ragtime music came floating across the fields on the cool night breeze.

"I know that place," said Frontivard. "It is a summer garden of evil repute. I wonder——"

"By George!" interrupted Reverdy, "they are stopping."

"Our chase might well end there," said Frontivard, "if, as I suspect, this fellow is leading the girl into a trap." Then to the chauffeur: "Drive past without changing your speed, go on for a quarter of a mile, then return by a roundabout way, cover your lights, drive into the field behind the willows, and wait for us."

Fifty yards behind the summer garden the two friends dropped from the running board—a trick they knew well—and fell flat upon their faces among the weeds. The touring car went on without any check in its speed that might have suggested to a watchful mind that it had lost its passengers. It was a clear, moonless night, the summer sky studded with myriads of stars. There was no light in the region save the dull gleam from among the trees of the roadhouse garden. Frontivard raised himself cautiously and peered over the top of the weeds.

"Ah," he whispered, "there they are across the way! I thought they would not enter."

Two shadows loomed dimly across the way, yet not so dimly but that the keen eyes of Frontivard could detect that they were a man and a woman. They continued to walk westward. Frontivard and Reverdy followed them, keeping in the shadow of the willows on their side of the road. The taxi had gone back by the way it had come.

The objects of pursuit walked rapidly, the stranger apparently hurrying his companion. More than once the latter appeared to pause; and as often did the stranger overcome her fears, her doubts, her scruples, perhaps, by an appeal, no doubt to her filial love.

"By George, they'll reach the Mississippi if they keep on!" muttered Reverdy.

"They're gone!" exclaimed Frontivard, in a whisper. "Just as though the ground had swallowed them up. Be careful, he may have observed us and stepped into the shadow of the trees over yonder to let us pass."

Advancing cautiously the two detectives came to a street running across the commons at right angles to the one which they followed.

"This must be their road," said Frontivard. "Come on," and he crossed boldly to a group of willows near which the objects of their espionage had last been seen; but the stranger and the girl were nowhere in sight. The street running northward, however, was little better than a country road, lined by rows of willows; and about two hundred yards further on it entered a small wood. The street running westward was much broader, bordered by rotting wooden sidewalks, and at a distance of four or five blocks lights gleamed from the windows of a row of houses. Frontivard and Reverdy proceeded northward from the group of willows at the corner, and in a few moments entered the wood. Here they had not proceeded more than a hundred yards when a low, square, massive-looking building loomed in front of them. The stranger and the girl seemed to have disappeared completely. The two detectives paused irresolute.

"It looks as if they had given us the slip," said Reverdy.

"So it appears," said Frontivard, "and yet it seems to me that that house yonder might be worth investigating."

"It certainly looks very suitable for a haunt of the 'Reds,' and yet it seems so completely deserted."

Even as Reverdy spoke a dim light gleamed for a single instant from an upper window, disappearing as suddenly as when the slide of a dark-lantern is drawn.

"You see, it is not so deserted as it appears," remarked Frontivard, "and whoever is within seems very cautious about showing a light."

"Then you think it is the den of the men who hold the girl's father prisoner?"

"I strongly suspect it," rejoined Frontivard. "And if it is we may run our heads into a hornets' nest."

"Yes, and a man may be murdered and a woman worse than murdered; the 'Reds' are capable of anything," said Reverdy. "Go ahead."

The friends crossed the road and inspected the house. At the front was a small porch upon which the front door opened, above the porch was a balcony. The window in which the light had appeared opened upon this balcony.

"Reverdy," said Frontivard, "stand upon that second step and give me a back."

A moment later he grasped the railing of the balcony and swung himself over it. Approaching the window he tried it cautiously. It yielded to his pressure. Going to the railing again he got over it, braced one knee on the planks which projected beneath, grasped one of the posts which supported the roof of the balcony with one hand, and leaning far downward stretched the other hand to Reverdy. Reverdy made a quick leap and grasped the outstretched hand, and an instant later the two friends were standing together in the balcony. They opened the window, entered, and found themselves in a carpeted room. It was perfectly dark save that presently they perceived, on the side opposite to them, a thin ray of light which was projected from a point about three feet from the floor.

"Keyhole," whispered Frontivard. Tiptoeing across the room he knelt before the door. Reverdy was at his side in an instant.

"Our man!" again whispered Frontivard. Rising, he pressed gently against the door, at the same time turning the handle with infinite care. The door yielded slowly to his hand, and through the crack thus opened the two friends looked into the room. This was what they saw:

Facing them, a woman with her back against the wall, her face pale, her eyes dilated with terror, yet evidently striving to retain her self-possession in the presence of impending danger; facing her, his back to the slowly opening door, the stranger.

The woman was very beautiful, with the beauty of Southern lands.

"San Benito," she was saying, "where is my father?"

"It is not of your father that I wish to speak, my pretty Signora."

"Where is my father? You swore you would take me to him!"

"Did I? Ah, Signora, I would have sworn my soul away to induce you to come here with me tonight!"

The door opened just a trifle wider.

"What do you mean?"

"You are in my power. This place is far from any other; your shrieks will not be heard by any who will heed them."

Even as he spoke the girl gave a sudden start. San Benito, thinking he heard a noise behind him, turned around. A hand fell heavily upon his shoulder and spun him round and round. When the Italian recovered himself a stiletto was gleaming in his hand. But he had no chance to use it. Stepping in with the address of a clever boxer, Reverdy struck him squarely upon the jaw, and San Benito measured his length upon the floor, unconscious, for the time at least, of everything that was happening around him.

"Signora," said Frontivard, bowing low and speaking in the best Italian at his command, which Tony Perugi had declared was as good Sicilian as he himself was master of, "we are entirely at your service."

But the girl did not hear him. Her eyes were closed, she reeled and would have fallen had not Reverdy caught her in his arms. Frontivard produced a smelling bottle.

"Bring her to, Reverdy, while I see what this fellow has about him; if any of his friends are hereabouts, we haven't any time to lose." And bending over San Benito he proceeded to investigate his pockets with as much sang-froid as a surgeon might display in searching for a wound. Scruples did not bother Frontivard. His first discovery was a revolver which he placed in his pocket, remarking, "We may need as many of these as we can handle before we are through."

He found nothing else but some letters. These he was about to replace, but changed his mind. "We may need them, too," he said, and picking up the stiletto, which had fallen from the Italian's hand, he took the letters and the weapon to the light. The latter was of curious workmanship. It was of solid steel, hilt and blade in one piece, and the hilt was surmounted by a death's head, the guard representing crossbones. Frontivard laid it beside the droplight without comment, and turned to the investigation of the letters. The first he unfolded appeared to be a copy of an address or proclamation of some sort. It was written in Italian and began: "To the Brothers of the Red."

"Ah," muttered Frontivard, "maybe here is a solution of our mystery!"

He glanced hastily over the contents. It was evidently from the head of the order, and was couched in the language of a Caesar. Near the end this paragraph caught Frontivard's eye:

"Angelo Corte permitted many abuses to pass unpunished; I will permit none. Those who have infringed the rules of the Order shall die! Our brotherhood must, and shall, return to the pursuit of the sacred object from which it has swerved—the advancement of Liberty."

"Advancement of murder!" muttered Frontivard.

The paper was signed: "Carlo Monaldi, Grand Master."

Frontivard took up another letter. The date was a week old and it was addressed to: "Giuldio San Benito." He glanced hastily through it, sentences catching his eye here and there which threw additional light upon the Brothers of the Red and the character of San Benito. The fragments which caught his eye read thus:

"...... Monaldi carries things with a high hand——he may be expected here at any time, and the worst of it is none of the members of Lodge No. 13 know him; therefore, beware of strangers who have the password and countersign .... Our president, Carlotto, is a fanatic. He will carry out the decrees of Monaldi no matter whom they may involve —— The murder of Vasily, the Russian, so profitable to us, must be laid to the defense of the Order .... to keep him from betraying secrets betrayed to him by Mascardo .... Use Mascardo as a bait to lure his daughter to the meeting-place, but not to the meeting. The Brothers will depart by the subterranean passage, as usual, and you may have your will with her undisturbed. But beware of Carlotto .... Lodge No. 13 has been selected to carry out a plot against the Czar .... I wormed it out of Carlotto .... We may all expect orders any day to proceed to No. 60 Street St. Michael, Moscow...... a very foolish undertaking, which I hope you and I may be able to avoid taking part in .... I will see you on the night of the meeting. BENEDETTO."

"Nice fellow—Benedetto!" observed Frontivard, as he folded the letter. He was about to take up another when he was interrupted by a deep sigh. The girl was reviving. Reverdy had placed her on a sofa which occupied one side of the room. Opening her eyes she looked at him a moment bewildered; then, recollection suddenly returning to her, she raised herself on the couch:

"Who are you?" she asked.

"A friend."

"And my father?"

"We will do all that men can to save him."

"Signora," said Frontivard, coming forward, "your father is in the hands of the Brothers of the Red."

"Ah, you know him, then?"

"His name is Mascardo."

"That is true."

"He is accused of betraying the secrets of the Order."

"Their secrets? How could he betray their secrets? He is an old man."

"Tell us what you know? Be brief."

"I know nothing save that four days ago my father disappeared from home, and that yesterday. I received this note from San Benito."

She took from her dress a note which she handed to Frontivard. It read:

"Signora Bianca:—Your father is in the hands of the Brothers of the Red. If you would save his life meet me tomorrow evening at eight o'clock at the Douglas Arcade. As you love your father do not disregard this letter.

"SAN BENITO."

"Why did you not give this letter to the chief of police?"

"The chief of police? What could he do against the Brothers of the Red?"

"As much, perhaps, as we shall be able to do."

"Do you know the place in which your father is held prisoner?" asked Reverdy.

"I know nothing."

"We shall soon learn, I think," said Frontivard. "I see that San Benito is coming back to life; fortunately my friend's blow only stunned him."

"Fortunately?"

"Yes; for he is about to become our ally."

"San Benito become your ally? You do not know him."

"No; and I do not care to. Nevertheless, you will see that he will become our ally."

By this time San Benito was showing unmistakable signs of returning consciousness.

Frontivard went to the table upon which the droplight stood, took up San Benito's letters and placed them in his pocket; picked up the stiletto, concealing it in his sleeve; and then made a rapid survey of the room. It had the peculiarity of having no windows. Only two doors opened out of it; the one by which Reverdy and Frontivard had entered and another. Frontivard went to the first door. It opened into a bedroom which was without other outlet save the window which stood open opposite to him. He went to the second door. It opened into a dark passage. In the passage the door of a closet stood ajar. Beyond the closet was a stairway.

"An excellent carpenter built this house," said Frontivard to himself, "none of the doors creak."

Then turning toward Reverdy and the girl, he beckoned to them. As they drew near he said:

"Please step into this closet."

"Why? What are you going to do?"

"Make San Benito our ally. Come, hurry up."

Reverdy and the girl obeyed, the latter not without hesitation.

"Hurry!" said Frontivard.

No sooner were they in the closet than Frontivard sprang to the door opening into the passage to watch the movements of San Benito when he should fully revive. They had not been a moment too soon. San Benito had sighed several times, and now, opening his eyes, he stared about him in a bewildered way. All at once he leaped to his feet as if acted upon by a spring.

"Gone! gone!" he gulped excitedly.

He sprang to the bedroom door, but was forced to lean against the casing for support. At sight of the open window the whole truth seemed to flash through his brain. He turned toward the door behind which Frontivard was watching through the keyhole. Frontivard regained the closet with a step as light as a cat's.

San Benito opened the door, and going to the railing of the stairway called in a low tone:

"Benedetto! Benedetto!"

"Hist!" said a voice from the darkness below.

San Benito went to the stairway and descended it rapidly.

A moment later Frontivard issued from the closet.

"Wait for me here," he whispered to Reverdy. "If you hear a scuffle, go through the window; you know the road."

"And leave you?"

"What could you do? If there is only San Benito I will not need your assistance. If there are more, I shall be dead before your foot touches the first step."

"Then let me go with you."

"And what of the girl then? No, no! For what I am going to do two would be too many."

"But——"

Before the words were out of Reverdy's mouth, Frontivard was at the head of the stairs. The passage was in perfect darkness, for San Benito had closed the door of the room behind him. Frontivard descended the stairs with a stealthy step. When he was halfway down he heard voices, and crouched on the stairs to listen:

"The password and countersign are changed," was what he heard.

"For the whole Order?"

"Yes."

"What are they?"

"The password is 'Moscow,' the countersign 'Death'."

"But did you hear no noise?"

"Not a sound."

"Curse these padded floors!"

"And they are gone?"

"Yes, through the window as they came. Oh, but I will have vengeance! I will find her though she fly to the end of the world, and her father shall die!"

"But I thought the murder of Vasily was to be a mistake in a good cause, and Mascardo was to go free for lack of an accuser?"

"Mascardo shall die!"

"Good! A crime is better than a mistake."

"Have the Brothers met?"

"Yes, in the underground chamber."

Frontivard heard a door open and close; and rising, he cautiously descended to the bottom of the stairs. In front of him, leaning against the wall, he could just discern the black shadow of a man. A moment later Benedetto became conscious of a man standing behind him. He turned and was about to cry out; but a grip of steel closed upon his throat, a pang as of hot iron pierced his heart, and he sank dying into the arms of Frontivard.

"You have killed him!" said a voice at Frontivard's elbow. It was Reverdy.

"I had to. Where is the girl?"

"I am here," she answered, in a trembling voice. Her self-control was almost gone.

"Good! Reverdy, since you are here, you and Signora Bianca follow me. Take your cue from my actions. I am going to stake all our lives upon a cast of the dice. In ten minutes either we shall all be as good as dead, or San Benito taken in his own net."

Feeling along the wall, Frontivard found the spring of the door through which San Benito had passed. It opened readily, and disclosed a winding stairway leading downward and illumined by a dim ray of light, which seemed to filter upward from below. The steps were of stone, and Frontivard trod them with the care of a man to whom a misstep might cost life. Reverdy and the girl followed with equal caution. Presently a turn of the stair disclosed another door through which the light came by means of a small square opening placed at about the height of a man's head. Creeping downward, Frontivard peered through the opening and beheld—a meeting of the Brothers of the Red.

In a large room, the walls of which were hung with red burlap, was a table covered with a red cloth. This table formed three sides of a hollow square, and around it were seated fifteen swarthy, desperate-looking men. Beside each of them was a stiletto stuck in the board. The fourth side of the square was open, and on that side, at a small table elevated above the others by a platform about a foot high, sat a man who was evidently the president, Carlotto. His back was toward Frontivard. In front of him, bound to a chair, was an old, gray-haired man, whose glance, nevertheless, was as bright and fierce as an eagle's.

"Mascardo!" muttered Frontivard.

Behind the prisoner, the bricks, with which the floor of the chamber was paved, had been removed, and an open grave, neatly bricked up at the sides, foreshadowed his fate only too plainly. Beside the grave stood a bucket of mortar and beside the bucket lay two trowels.

A friend of Frontivard's had once offended him by remarking that he looked enough like a bravo to have hailed from Sicily; now, however, he thought the resemblance might stand him in good stead. As he gazed upon that circle of fierce eyes there rushed upon his mind a full realization of the desperate game he played; and it was in answer to his thoughts, perhaps, that he muttered:

"Too late!"

Luigi Mascardo," said the president, "you are accused of betraying the secrets of the Brothers of the Red. What answer do you make to the charge?"

At the first words Mascardo's daughter murmured, "My father!" and made a movement toward the door, but Frontivard left the prints of his fingers on her wrist and she was still. The sobbing exclamation had not been heard.

Mascardo's glance and tone were full of defiance as he answered, "Loose my bonds and I will plead!"

"Release him," said Carlotto. "He shall have justice."

In a moment the cords were cut and Mascardo rose. He was a tall man, powerful despite his many years, stern and commanding.

"Who is my accuser?" he demanded.

"San Benito," said Carlotto, "make your charge."

San Benito arose. His seat was directly opposite that of the president.

"I accuse——" he began.

"Swear!" said Carlotto, interrupting him, "swear upon the dagger!"

San Benito laid his hand upon his neighbor's stiletto.

"No," said the man, "swear upon your own."

"I have none."

"You have none? Where is it?"

"San Benito," said Carlotto, "where is your dagger?"

"It is here!" said Frontivard, flinging open the door and throwing a bloody weapon on the table before Carlotto.

The president leaped to his feet, and every man at the large table imitated his example. Fifteen stilettos gleamed in the lamplight. Frontivard faced them with folded arms. Reverdy stepped forward so as to be close enough to strike Carlotto first in the death struggle that seemed pending. Mascardo's daughter rushed past the president and threw herself upon her father's breast.

"Death to them!" shouted San Benito.

"Who are you?" demanded Carlotto.

"I am the Grand Master. I am Carlo Monaldi."

"The password?"

"Moscow."

"The countersign?"

"Death."

Instantly the daggers disappeared like so many meteors.

"I bid you welcome," said Carlotto, transformed by the potent words from a tiger into a purring house cat, "and I beg you to pardon your reception, but your entrance was so unexpected. Your place is here," he added, motioning Frontivard to the chair from which he had risen.

"Had you kept good watch I had not surprised you," said Frontivard, "but let that pass. I am here to accuse, not to preside. Resume the chair."

Carlotto seated himself, but not without hesitation, so great was his respect for the Grand Master. Frontivard faced the circle around the table. Every eye was turned upon him with respect; his command was complete. San Benito, his jaw dropped, sat as if dazed.

"Mascardo," said Frontivard, "you are free. San Benito, I accuse you of the murder of Vasily, the Russian, of the murder of Benedetto, and of plotting the death of Mascardo; all of whom, save Benedetto, have committed no offense against our Order. Furthermore, I accuse you of using the name and power of the Order for your private profit and for your personal ends."

"Swear!" shouted San Benito, "swear upon the dagger!"

When Frontivard had struck Benedetto, he had secured the dagger of the dying man; and now, taking the weapon from an inner pocket, he stuck it in the table before Carlotto.

"Administer the oath," he said.

"Lay your hand upon the dagger."

Frontivard did so.

"Do you swear upon the dagger, upon your honor, and your eternal welfare that the accusations which you have made are true?"

"I swear."

"The proofs! the proofs!" shrieked San Benito."

"This letter and the body of Benedetto lying yonder. You murdered him, your accomplice, to cover up your own guilt," and Frontivard laid Benedetto's letter to San Benito on the table.

"Let justice be done," he said.

Carlotto read the letter to the Lodge, only omitting that part in which the Russian plot was mentioned. When he had concluded, Frontivard said:

"San Benito has long been under suspicion of the Grand Chapter. Tonight I followed him here. He could not carry out his plan to entrap Signora Bianca because she was forewarned; Benedetto had confessed all to me. And it was to prevent his testifying before the Lodge that Benedetto fell a victim to the dagger of his accomplice."

"And this letter?"

"Was stolen from San Benito's pocket by Benedetto, who wrote it, and given to me."

"Brothers of the Red," said Carlotto, "San Benito's guilt is proven. What is your sentence?"

"Death! Death! the death that Mascardo was to die!"

There was not a dissenting voice. Four strong arms seized the doomed man.

"He lies! He is not the Grand Master!" screamed San Benito. Foam was on his lips, rage, terror, demoniac hate, gleamed in his eyes.

"Gag him!" thundered Carlotto. The order was obeyed.

Twenty minutes later a deep silence reigned, broken only by an ominous grating, metallic sound. Bianca placed her hands over her ears to shut out the sound, great beads of perspiration formed on Reverdy's forehead. Horror was depicted on every countenance save that of Frontivard, whose face was cold and impassive. Already the bricks had been replaced over the spot where the body of San Benito had been laid, the grave intended for Mascardo, the girl's father.

Frontivard was the first to break the terrible silence that ensued: "Carlotto," he said, "have you money for the Russian journey?"

"We have received none from the Grand Chapter, but there is enough in the Lodge treasury."

"Good. Do you know where to go?"

"To the number and place mentioned in Benedetto's letter."

"Very well, take the money you have and proceed there without delay. You must meet there on the night of the 21st of July. You will then receive further instruction. Hold intercourse with no one before the meeting. The Grand Chapter will reimburse the Lodge's expenditure."

"The order shall be obeyed."

"Are your men instructed?"

"They received their instructions tonight before you came. We only awaited the order."

"The meeting is adjourned," said Frontivard. Then turning to Mascardo, he said: "You and your daughter will remain here, I have instructions to give you."

One by one the Brothers of the Red departed by the subterranean passage and Frontivard, Reverdy, Mascardo, and his daughter were left alone. A few minutes later rescued and rescuers were standing together in the windowless chamber. Through the open door of the bedroom a faint breeze entered, refreshing as a breath from heaven. While Frontivard and Reverdy were exchanging a few words apart, Mascardo had been speaking to his daughter. He now came up to the two friends.

"Signor Monaldi," he began, addressing Frontivard, "accept from me this ring."

Frontivard looked at him with a queer smile. "Are you a Brother of the Red?" he asked.

"I had scarcely heard of them until I became their prisoner."

"You did not betray their secrets then?"

"I could not very well have done so."

"And San Benito?"

"He was a suitor for my daughter's hand. We both had long feared and hated him."

"And Vasily?"

"He was a rich Russian, a friend of mine, who disappeared mysteriously; a disappearance which has been explained tonight."

"Well, since you are not a Brother of the Red, neither am I Carlo Monaldi."

"Then in Heaven's name, who are you?"

"My name is Cesare Frontivard."

"And your friend?"

"Edmund Reverdy."

"And you are not Brothers of the Red?"

"No."

"But I do not understand! The command—the control you exercised over those men?"

"A trick—a lie—that is all! But what do you care, if by it you are saved from death and your daughter from worse, and San Benito has fallen into the pit he digged for others?"

* * * * *

The next morning Reverdy and Frontivard were standing in the rotunda of the Federal Building. Frontivard glanced at his friend's finger. Upon it gleamed a diamond as magnificent as that presented by Mascardo.

"Ah," he said, "when are you going to pay your respects to Signora Bianca?"

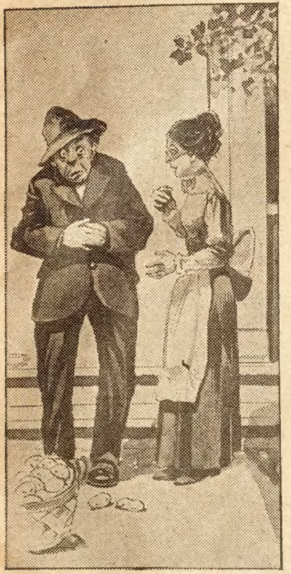
"This evening," replied Reverdy, laconically.

In his hand Frontivard carried a let-

(Continued on page twenty-six.)

A Wonderful Discovery

By Willis E. Link



She wondered what would follow.

IF LONELY old maids—and probably bachelors — only knew the virtues of a certain preparation, it is the belief of a nice little woman living in an Eastern village that the State of Matrimony would receive thousands of new subjects in short order. She often feels that the unperceived qualities of this substance as a powerful aid to Cupid ought to be generally known —by the above-mentioned needy class, of course, as the married don't need any information and young people might be somewhat reckless in their use of the great secret—but this nice little woman is so unassuming that she cannot muster up courage to come before the parties who would be benefited and proclaim her discovery. Besides, she is naturally quite delicate about letting out a possible intimation to a certain individual that he has had the benefit of this course of treatment. It might result in some complication.

In the very strictest confidence, however, she has told a special friend, and this friend in the very strictest confidence has told a special friend, and confidentially this last lady told us, and now we think we should pass it along to where it may do some good. The married will not read any further, and frisky young people should follow the example of their elders.

First, we will tell something about Miss Amanda Brown, the nice little woman who lived in this Eastern village —we will use the past tense from this on. She occupied a neat cottage, and by dressmaking, nursing the sick, and skillful managing of her finances managed to get on in pretty good shape. She was a trim little body and always busy at something. When she was a young lady she had received a few calls from young men, but with a parent's perversity these attentions were discouraged by the father and mother, for it was hard to find a fellow good enough for Amanda. She was different and unassuming and not particularly pretty, so young men did not persevere in their attentions. At thirty it was accepted by everybody that she would never trot in double harness with any one. To tell the truth, she didn't like this condition of things, but what could she do? When the father and mother passed away, leaving her the cottage, she surely was lonely.

As the years went by after the death of her parents, outwardly Amanda cheerfully accepted her spinsterhood as a matter of course, but secretly she rebelled. As time wore on, her dissatisfaction grew more intense. It is no wonder that she became quite desperate.

Sometimes she studied over the "agents wanted" advertisements in some periodical and would write for circulars. She never could nerve herself to take the fatal plunge and become a canvasser. But there was something fascinating in reading the glowing literature she received, and the building of air castles for a day or two. In time circulars of all kinds began to be in her mail and everything usually received a careful reading. One day she was attracted by a description of the Great Oriental Powders of Love. A large page of fine type was used in extolling this wonderful secret charm of the harems of the East. It cost only one dollar.

The more Amanda studied the description, the more she wished she had a package in her possession. She could not afford to throw away a dollar upon an experiment, but a sure thing was different. A husband surely was worth that. She read the preparation was "warranted to be absolutely sure in its results—failure never was known," and hesitated no longer. The dollar was sent. There were several days of important waiting. Then the package came.

It was a very small affair, a tiny envelope containing a white powder. The skeptical might say it was nothing but rice flour with a drop or two of some chemical to give it a peculiar odor, but we will not express an opinion. The directions gave various methods of using. Amanda concluded to be ready for any emergency, so she divided the powder into halves and dissolved one of the portions in a small bottle of water. This she placed upon a shelf in her pantry.

Whom should she use the charm upon? This question had bothered her for a week. Now that she was, as it were, armed for victory, she had not definitely decided. There were a half dozen possible victims in the vicinity. She went over the list, and now that she must make a choice there seemed to be something unsatisfactory with each one of the bunch. One was a widower with grown-up daughters. Another widower had a number of small children. An old bachelor was too vulgar and unrefined. The principal of the school was younger than she by several years, and it was reported that he was engaged to a girl in a neighboring village. All the other unattached Amanda realized were too young to be considered appropriate for her purpose. She would have to visit some of the surrounding communities to find the right man. She had relatives and friends who had often given her a warm invitation. Whom should she visit first? For two or three days she pondered over this, and just as she had arrived at a decision, something happened.

It was a beautiful autumn day. Amanda's household duties had been attended to and everything was "spick and span." She sat in an easy chair, buried in thought, as she planned her course of action for the next few days. She was aroused by a knock at the door. When she opened it she found Matthew Munger holding a number of potatoes in his hands. He wished to sell her a supply for the winter coming on, and he exhibited his samples.

As she faced Matthew, Amanda grew weak as a thought flashed through her brain. For some reason she had left this man entirely out of consideration. She ought not to have done so, for surely he was available material. Considerably unnerved, she stepped out upon the piazza and tried to converse upon the subject of potatoes.

Matthew was an old bachelor who lived alone on his small farm a mile away. He was somewhat unkempt as to appearances, but this was not to be wondered at. His character and intelligence were up to the average of other men around. Why he never married, no one knew, but as he was extremely bashful in the presence of women it was set down to that.

Matthew was embarrassed as he tried to expatiate about his tubers. As for Amanda, she quickly resolved the hour for action had arrived. Look where she would, she could not better herself. In fact, she felt so drawn toward the potato man she wondered if she was not in love herself. She remembered she had taken a tiny taste of the powder an hour or so before, just to gratify a growing curiosity, and, perhaps, it was working! How was she going to get some of the wonderful stuff incorporated into the system of the man before her. The directions said, "the first opportunity." Here was the man, but where was the opportunity? She could hardly grasp Matthew and force him to take his medicine, just as she had seen mothers force castor oil down an unwilling child. There came a flash of inspiration.

"I like to talk with a man who knows so much about potatoes," she said, "and I am going in and bring out some tea. Then we will sit on the steps and talk a while." With that, she flew into the house.

Matthew was not opposed to this idea. He probably would sell some potatoes by being sociable, and surely Amanda Brown was a nice little woman to talk with. He really liked to talk with women, but he always felt as if he was intruding. In this case, he felt quite easy in his mind.

Amanda hurried in the preparation of the tea. Her blood was bounding through her veins with excitement. She soon had two cups ready on a server. She rushed to the pantry and seized a bottle from the shelf. Her hands shook and her eyes were nearly blinded as she poured a quantity into one of the cups. Setting the bottle down upon the kitchen table, she hurried out with the tea to where her victim sat idly twirling his thumbs.

"Gosh! Amanda is not a bad-looking woman," thought Matthew, as he noticed the flushed face and sparkling eyes.

Amanda seated herself upon the step of porch in close proximity to Matthew. He took the cup she presented and proceeded to swallow a mouthful of the beverage. An expression of blank wonder came over his face all unnoticed by Amanda as she sat waiting for developments.

The taste was surely abominable. But it would not do to show any lack of appreciation for Amanda's courtesy, so with a heroic effort the cup was drained quickly.

She wondered what would follow the administration of the charm. Perhaps he would immediately try to hug her—she always understood lovers were crazy to do some such thing. If he should put his arm around her, what should she do? She realized she knew so little about some things.

Her perplexity was cut short by Matthew jumping to his feet and rushing into the yard. He had gone but a few yards when he was compelled to stop by the terrible nausea now afflicting him. To say that Amanda was surprised is to put it mildly. She knew not what to expect, but surely no such actions as this. As for Matthew, he was a pretty sick man. When he considered himself through with the business at hand, he could scarcely stand upon his feet.

"Come into the house and lie upon the sofa a while," suggested Amanda.

"Guess I will until this fit leaves," replied Matthew, and started toward the house. But his legs were wabbly, and he might have fallen to the ground if Amanda had not run to his assistance.

She supported him up the steps of the porch, and like a drowning man who clutches at a straw, he clutched at what happened to be Amanda's waist. He did not realize this, but she did, and a warm glow filled her heart. He soon was lying upon the sofa, where he remained for half an hour. Amanda seated herself in a chair not far from the ailing man and waited for what was to come. Matthew finally sat up.

At this moment the door opened suddenly—near neighbors in a village sometimes use scant ceremony—and Mrs. Boggs, fat, jolly, and burning with curiosity, entered the room.

"I just couldn't stand it any longer, but had to come over and tell you how pleased I am that you two are engaged," gurgled the intruder. "You are just suited for each other—there ain't any couple around more so. But you folks have been mighty sly about your lovemaking," concluded Mrs. Boggs, as she sat down in a convenient chair.

Matthew could only stare in consternation at the happy fat woman; Amanda smiled affably, for wasn't all this a sure thing? In spite of what happened outdoors, undoubtedly enough of the Great Oriental Powder of Love had taken hold to do its proper work.

"Matthew Munger," and Mrs. Boggs in mock severity pointed a chubby finger at the miserable man, "you needn't try to look so surprised and innocent—although you are doing it pretty fine—but I saw you and Amanda hugging each other when you came into the house. I suppose you forgot where you were, but it is nobody's business. When is the wedding going to take place? You needn't be afraid I will tell, but I do have such an interest in Amanda," and the irrepressible woman arose to pat her neighbor affectionately upon the head.

Matthew was all but paralyzed by this time, and was completely at sea as to what to do or say.

"Ask Amanda," he managed to blurt out, with a forlorn hope that she could clarify a desperately muddled situation.

"In a month," sweetly and contentedly announced the completely happy bride-to-be.

If the two women had glanced at Matthew they would have seen a perfectly dumfounded man.

"Everybody will be so glad," stated Mrs. Boggs, in a most positive way. "I know I am intruding, so I will get out," and in a moment the neighbor was gone. She was busy making calls the rest of the afternoon.

Matthew was in a dreadful hazy state of mind. As he glanced at Amanda's contented face, a wild idea came to him. He rose and slowly stepped to where she was sitting. He leaned over, and as the two faces came near some lips also came into range and—but what is the use? This old bachelor and old maid took to some things just as naturally as ducks to water.

"It isn't hard to pop the question after all," soliloquized Matthew, when he had started back for his own domicile, an hour or so after the departure of Mrs. Boggs. "In fact, it just about pops itself when things get right."

After Matthew left, Amanda went to the table to get the bottle she had left there and replace it upon the shelf. As she picked it up, she gave a cry of surprise. It was ipecac. From among her stock of drugs and sundries upon the shelf she had taken the wrong bottle in her excitement.

"It did the business all right," she murmured, "but I must own I am surprised at what all it is good for. This bottle only cost a nickel, too, and there is a good dose left for somebody else who needs it."

⁂

A Mean Advantage.

"A woman will take any mean advantage of you that she can," observed McBippert. "Ever notice that?"

"No, I never noticed it particularly," answered Obbs.

"Well, it's a fact. Do you know what my wife did last night? Last night I came home mad. I had been working hard and things had gone wrong. First thing as I entered the house I stumbled over a chair that had been carefully placed there for that purpose. Everything in the house was lost or in the wrong place. I was pretty mad, and I was late for dinner, and everything else was wrong.

"My wife didn't say a word. She placed my dinner before me, and I started to eat it. I found fault with everything and said everything I could think of, which was a great deal, for I had my imagination with me.

"But it didn't ruffle my wife. She went into the library adjoining the dining-room, and I whooped it up good and plenty. Pretty soon I thought of something extra brilliant, so brilliant that I had to say it to her face. I got up and followed her into the library to see the effect the remark would have upon her. Just as I was in the midst of the choice remark, I saw calmly sitting there the wife of my boss! Now what do you think of that?"

"Didn't your wife make faces or frown or do anything else to let you know that the wife of your boss was in there?" asked Obbs.

"She did not. Not a sign. She let me go the limit. If I had ripped out a string of cuss words a mile long it would have been all the same to her. She would have been just so much better satisfied. Can you beat that? Would a man have done that?"

"Most women don't like to show up their husbands," observed Obbs, thoughtfully.

"No, but when they do take a notion to show them up there isn't a man in the world that can put it over the way they can. You have to hand it to them for being able to do that.

"She didn't tell me there wasn't anybody in the house, but it seems to me that she would have given me some warning. I know I felt safe. Henceforth I shall have to look through every cupboard and recess to see if there are visitors in the house before I dare express myself on the subject of there being no matches in the house. For a few days I'll look under the sofa to make sure."

"The best thing you can do is to cut out the rough talk," suggested Obbs, cautiously. "Act as if there were company in the house all the time."

⁂

His Reasoning.

A lawyer once asked a man who had at various times sat on several juries: "Who influenced you most, the lawyers, the witnesses, or the judge?"

He expected to get some useful and interesting information from so experienced a juryman. This was the man's reply:

"I'll tell yer, sir, 'ow I makes up my mind. I'm a plain man and a reasonin' man, and I ain't influenced by anything the lawyers say, nor by what the witnesses say; no, nor by what the judge says. I just looks at the man in the dock, and I says: 'If he ain't done nothing, why's he there?' and I brings 'em all in guilty."

⁂

Took the Hint.

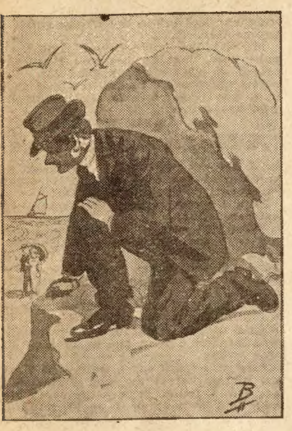
A certain bishop with rather a reputation for verbosity rose to address the House of Lords on some important question. He began: "I will divide my speech into twelve heads." His listeners shivered and thought of the door.

Just then Lord Salisbury got on his legs and begged to interpose a little anecdote. "A friend of mine," said the noble marquis, "was returning home late one night, when, opposite St. Paul's, he saw a drunken man trying to ascertain the time on the big clock there. At that moment it began to strike, and slowly tolled out twelve. The man listened, looked hard at the clock, and said: 'Confound you, why couldn't you have said that all at once?'"

The chamber, needless to say, resounded with laughter, in which the bishop heartily joined; and, what is more, he took the hint.

AN ENGINEER'S NERVE

Or, BURT CORBIN'S TEST -:- By F. LEE ALLEN



A man was crouched behind a point of rock.

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CHAPTER I.

AN ADVENTURE.

THERE was some one in the shadow beside the long flight of stairs at Hermon Beach, as Burt Corbin began the ascent. Halfway up, he heard the rustle of a woman's skirts, and a girl, to judge by the light step, passed him in a blur of white, as she descended.

At the top a gas lamp cast a pale yellow glow. Here he stopped for a moment, as he heard the tinkling notes of a mandolin that came from one of the cottages that lined the bluff.

Below the beach shone gray in the early darkness of an August evening. Here and there little specks of white flashed, as the water foamed upon shore, while out beyond the myriad starlike electric bulbs that marked the pier, the riding lights of vessels at anchor rose and fell with every movement of the water. Creeping up from beyond the rim of the sea was the moon, red and gigantic.

Corbin turned impatiently as the racking note of a carrousel organ in the distance began its blatant melody. Suddenly, from the direction of the beach below, came the scream of a terrified woman. For just the fraction of a second Corbin hesitated. Again came the cry. There could be no mistaking the fear it voiced, and Corbin went down the stairs as rapidly as the darkness permitted.

There was the hurried scraping of shoes, a crash, a muttered curse; then the scratch of footsteps in the sand and pebbles, as some one darted away. Crouching against the rail of the stairway was a patch of white that outlined itself to the form of a woman.

The tiny light of a match showed Corbin a girl of nineteen or twenty, clad in a white duck costume. Her heavy brown hair was tied back by a colored ribbon, outlining a face piquant and refined. A look of fear hovered about the eyes and mouth.

"It is nothing," she said slowly, answering the question in Corbin's eyes. "I—was—I am afraid I have hurt my ankle a little. It was so silly of me to cry out."

The match sputtered and the light died out, as the girl hesitated, her voice filled with embarrassment. She was lying, was shielding some one, Corbin decided. For what reason? There had been a man waiting at the foot of the stairway as he ascended. Still she hadn't the look of a girl who would keep clandestine appointments.

"I can be of some help then, if you have hurt your ankle," he said, as he gave up the problem that was puzzling him with a shrug of the shoulders. The light from another match illuminated his features.

Corbin did not know that the gray eyes beneath the girl's heavy lashes had cast a swift appraising look, which noted the smooth-shaven face, the firm jaw and mouth, the breadth of shoulder, the tall figure. He was not yet thirty, she decided, and a man to be trusted.

As she was about to speak, Corbin's exclamation checked her.

"You have lost your watch," he said, as he pointed to the chain that dangled loosely from about her neck.

A startled expression came into the girl's face, as the tiny light sputtered out. Then Corbin heard her voice:

"You are mistaken," she said coldly. "But it was good of you," she went on quickly, "to trouble about me, I might have needed your help, you know. I can manage now, thank you. Good night." Corbin heard her as she started away up the stairs.

He felt that to follow would only be construed as an attempt to force his attentions upon her, so he waited until she would have reached the top.

It was no business of his, he told himself, if she wanted to shield the man who had taken her watch. Somehow he felt sure a watch had been at the end of that dangling chain; her manner, her evident embarrassment, were proof enough. Still he could not but feel a sense of disappointment, that a girl like her——

He laughed and struck a match, applying the end to the cigar he had thrust between his teeth. Growing sentimental over a chance encounter with a pretty girl, one whom he would probably never see again——

"It must be the moon," he soliloquized. "Hello!" as the light from the match fell upon some object bright and shining at his feet. Stooping, he picked up the object that had attracted his attention from the platform, and held it in his palm a second before his eyes, then slipped it in his pocket.

"Curious," he muttered. "Darned curious. If that was lost by the man who made such a quick get-away, he and I may meet yet." He turned and climbed the stairway.

As Corbin rode back to Hersley from Hermon Beach an hour later, he took no heed of the crowding Sunday night pleasure-seekers that filled the electric car. His mind was occupied with the adventure of that evening, or to be exact, with the image of the girl of the adventure. Little by little this, too, was crowded to one side, and the Fear began to obtrude upon him again—the great Fear, which had been his constant companion for the past three months; which had caused him to resign a passenger run on the Southern Division, and had driven him to Hersley to "buck the board" on the Northern.

That one great Fear had been ever present since the day upon which the old ninety-nine had jumped the track at the cross-over, and he had looked into the still, set face of his fireman, Johnny Baker, his friend, the boy who had failed to jump in time.

It had been present during all the investigation that had followed, in which he was exonerated from blame and given back his old run. Then he had asked for a month's leave of absence; Marshall had granted him this, as he had the request for a transfer to the Northern Division.

By day the Fear had been a constant companion; it pervaded his dreams at night. Even the very thought of it now sent a nervous chill of apprehension through his whole body. Yet he was not a coward or a weakling.

Fight, yes, he would fight every step of the way! He would win out over that Fear. Others had failed—but he wouldn't give up. He'd not go back to some old bone-pile of a switcher in the yard—he, one of the best rated men on the L. N. & N.

Through his mind ran words, which had repeated over and over again those last three months. Drive it away as he would, that phrase would always come back; it formed part of the Fear, it was the Fear, and the electric car's clicking wheels over rail-joints, took it up and sent it forth for all to hear:

"You've —lost —your—running—nerve. You've—lost—your running—nerve."

CHAPTER II.

MAKING AN ENEMY.

POP WHITE, engineer of the eleven P. M. shift in the Hersley yard, was holding forth to some length the following night in the locker-room of the roundhouse. And it was the subject that had engrossed so much of Corbin's waking moments upon which he talked.

"You, Morphy," he snapped, shaking a finger before the face of his fireman, "Don't you go get the idea that a man's a coward who loses his running nerve. I was a mite older than this Corbin when I lost mine—and I'll lick the man who says I'm a coward."

The engineer glared. Only one of the three men present laughed. That was Harding, the fireman, who had come to work for the L. N. & N. some three months before. Lewis Morphy knew Pop White's courage too well openly to doubt it, and Sam Flagg, the engineer of the Mail, knew not what hour of day might bring him face to face with the problem.

"This running nerve business's just a streak of yellow in the man," said the youthful Harding, looking to his boon companion, Morphy, for approval.

Pop White's eyes snapped. "By heck!" he declared. "If I only knew as much as you think you know, young fellow—but seeing's you're Corbin's smoke, you'll have a chance to see whether he's yellow or not. I say he ain't and I know, 'cause he started out with me here. When they made the road into two divisions, he went with the Southern. He wouldn't let anybody step on his toes, that boy wouldn't."

"Corbin isn't more than thirty, is he?" asked Sam Flagg.

"Twenty-nine, I guess," answered Pop, as he reached into his locker for his working shoes. "Got set up after he'd taken his three examinations. Been running four years. Sam, do you know I'm going to be danged sorry if that boy can't come back!"

Corbin came into the room at that moment, dinner pail in hand. He nodded to the men and went to his locker, which was at the extreme end of the row, near the wall. Pop White had lifted one foot with some difficulty to a bench, and was puffing and grunting in his endeavor to lace the shoe.

The two firemen, Morphy and Harding, were standing behind him, making fun of the old man behind his back. All this Corbin saw in the mirror upon the wall before him. The room was dimly lighted by a swinging oil lamp, hung from the center of the celing. Sam Flagg had left a moment after Corbin's arrival, his back, as was that of Pop White's was toward the two firemen.

In the mirror before him, Corbin saw Morphy stoop suddenly behind Pop White, pick something from the floor and hold the object half-exposed toward his companion. What it was Corbin could not see. Morphy slipped the object into his pocket as Pop White brought his foot to the floor, with a grunt.

"Getting fatter every day, Burt," he puffed. "Next thing, need somebody to dress me and a derrick to hoist me to the deck. Well, such is youth! Come along, Morphy," he grunted, as he glanced at his watch. As he stood in the doorway, he called back to Corbin, "Good luck!"

Harding followed Morphy from the locker-room, and Corbin found his fireman in the cab of the engine a few moments later. To Corbin's attempts at conversation, Harding for some reason made only surly responses. Harding could not explain it himself, but he had taken a dislike to Corbin; it might have been because he thought him a coward.

It was the first time in three months that Corbin had been upon the gangway of an engine. Small wonder that while his hand was steady as he pulled at the throttle for the run from the roundhouse to the freight yard, his heart was beating quickly, sending the blood racing through his body. He was face to face with the test that if he failed would brand him among the men he worked with. He would feel the disgrace keenly, for he was proud.

A grim line of determination had settled about his mouth. If he lost that battle for self-control it would not be without a fight. And what a fight it was that first night, only the man who has been through it knows. Many times Corbin's hand played nervously about the throttle, or the air valve. He knew that he was making no more than his schedule time (D), yet, suppose a rail should spread, a car flange break, the cars of a passing train buckle over upon him, a coupling snap, and the rear section come piling into the head end. Could he stop in time to avoid a bad accident? It was with haggard face and deep-sunken eyes that he brought the engine back into the roundhouse at Hersley the following morning.

They had been ordered back light from Mason. Harding had little work to do on the return trip, and had plenty of time to observe Corbin, and the expression he saw on his engineer's face seemed to give him satisfaction and to bring forth a sneering smile.

"He's yellow!" he muttered. "Wouldn't take much to make him wilt."

Pop White, returning from his eight-hour shift in the yard, had followed Corbin up to the ash pit. There had been some trouble with the injector, and for a while Corbin attempted to locate it before he turned the engine over to the waiting hostler. Later Corbin heard Pop White's voice raised in anger as he came outside the locker-room.

"The second time in a year somebody's been through these lockers!" he was saying hotly, as Corbin entered. "Forgot my money last night, Burt," the old engineer continued, turning to Corbin. "I'd just like to know the son of an oil-swabber who took it."

"You've looked in your working togs?" inquired Corbin.

"Been through every stitch of them. Seems so, too, I did put that bill-fold in my rear pocket along with the tobacco, when I changed," puzzled Pop. "To get into that locker they'd have to have special keys. By heck! I know I put it in my pocket!"

Morphy and Harding were changing their clothes, and at that moment Corbin thought he saw a look of warning upon Morphy's face directed toward Harding.

What was it Morphy had picked up from the floor the night before? Had it been Pop White's bill-fold?"

"Your fireman hasn't seen anything of it?" Corbin asked. "It might have dropped out of your pocket in the cab."

Morphy turned slowly and regarded Corbin, his black eyes flashing.

"If I did, what business is it of yours?" he inquired savagely.

"Hold on, Louie," cautioned Pop White. "Nobody's accusing you of taking it."

"What's he butting in for?" demanded Morphy, rebelliously.

A hard look came into Corbin's eyes and his jaws set firmly. "Since you take that stand," he said, keeping a grip on his temper, "I'll butt in further. What did you pick up off the floor here last night?"

"Go to blazes and find out!" snapped Morphy, his face flushed and threatening.

"You ain't playing a joke are you, Louie?" began Pop White. "Because if you are, you're carrying it too far."

"You're a pretty fresh sort of a guy, ain't you?" demanded Morphy, shoving Pop White to one side and striding up to Corbin. "Started out to run this Division right off the handle." Made bold by Corbin's apparently meek attitude, he continued with a show of bluster, "I've a good mind to smash you one for luck."

Corbin's gaze was steady and unwavering. Suddenly inflamed to a passion by the other's control, Morphy flung off his coat and swung it toward Harding.

"I'll show you up for what you are—a quitter!" he shouted, as he sprang forward.

There was a thud behind him, as his coat missed the oustretched hands of the surprised Harding and struck the floor. The next instant Pop White uttered an exclamation and darted forward, reached down, and among the articles strewn from the pockets of the fireman's coat held up a bill-fold.

"Look here, Morphy!" he demanded, grasping the fireman's arm and swinging him to a position facing him. "You're a darned sight smaller than I thought you——"

"You make me tired!" snarled the fireman, covering his confusion with a show of anger. "Suppose I'd steal your money. 'Course it was a joke—until this blamed right-sider butts in—and take it from me, old eagle-eye, I'll get back at you good and plenty, believe me! No one puts anything over on me like that!"

"You're making considerable fuss, Morphy," said Corbin, as he walked up to that person. "You may have intended keeping the money as a joke—then again you may not. My own opinion is that you had no intention of returning it." Morphy scowled darkly, his mustache retreating up under a pointed nose.

"If you feel aggrieved at that," Corbin continued calmly, "start something, and I'll accommodate you."

Morphy was about the same age as Corbin and of nearly the same build. Here the resemblance ceased, for while Corbin's face was frank and open, Morphy's eyes were shifty and uncertain, and his expressions were hidden by a carefully groomed mustache. It was a matter of comment, by the way, where Morphy was able to get the money to sport his tailor-made clothes and diamonds, which had gained him the nickname of Dude Louie.

At the present moment there was something in Corbin's eyes that dampened Morphy's courage. A bully at heart, he could not face a man his equal, let alone a master.

Pop White stepped in between the two men.

"Don't have any trouble with him, Burt," he advised. "The skunk ain't worth it. Playing a joke, was you?" he continued, addressing the fireman. "Play one like it again, and you'll laugh yourself sick over it."

"Here, Pop," demanded Morphy, beginning to realize what it would mean to him should the engineer brand him as a thief. "You don't think I intended to take that money do you?"

"Well, I'll tell you straight, boy. I think you did," said the old engineer, gravely. "Maybe, though, you did intend it as a joke—I can't prove you didn't, so we'll say nothing about it. But son, you'd better bid in some other job, for a cab's too small a space for a man to work with another he can't trust."

"Ah!" snarled Morphy. "I'll bid in another job, believe me. No wonder you and Corbin hang together," he muttered, as with Harding trailing behind him he started for the door. As he stood in the doorway he regarded the two men with an expression of sneering insolence, his mustache tilted to an angle at one corner of his mouth.

"You're both quitters!" he shouted, then sprang out the doorway, pulling Harding with him.

Pop White started forward to revenge the slur, but Corbin placed a restraining hand on his shoulder.

"Life's too short to whip every cur that snarls at us," he commented grimly. "Just wait till they bite, Pop, then wallop them."

CHAPTER III.

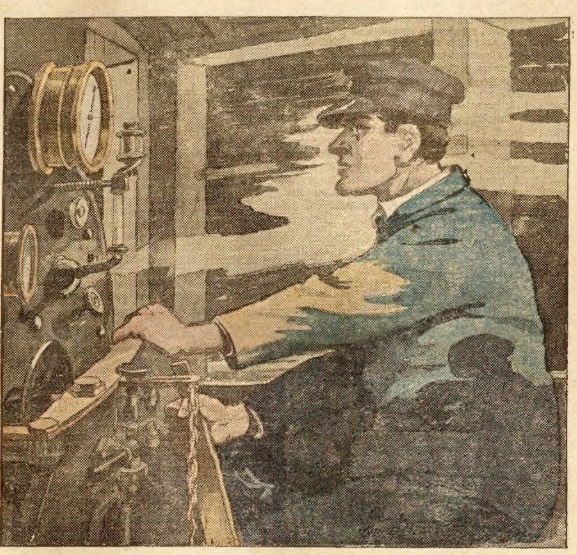
"BRAKES!"

EACH day that passed strengthened Corbin's confidence. He had been a fool ever to harbor a dread of losing his nerve, he told himself, or to ask for a transfer to the Northern Division.

Harding still continued as Corbin's fireman on the freight extra, which had been kept on as a regular run until the accumulation of freight at Hersley had been moved. The boy still kept his surly manner toward Corbin, at times it was even open hostility.

Two days after the occurrence in the roundhouse in which Corbin and Morphy had figured, Harding did not report until five minutes before the time to start. It was Thursday, the day of the weekly visit of the pay car.

One glance and Corbin saw that the boy had been drinking; his face was flushed and his step unsteady. He knew it was his duty not to allow Harding on the engine in his condition, but if he should turn him in and ask for another fireman, it would mean discipline for the boy, possibly discharge. It is easier to outline a duty, sometimes, than to follow it, and Corbin shrank from it in this case, and allowed Harding to climb to the cab.



Would the brakes never hold?

The drink had loosened the fireman's tongue.

"All right, old eagle-eye," he said thickly. "I'll have this hay machine popping in no time. You can't lose me."

"Let me tell you something," warned Corbin. "If you're going to fire for me, be around on time—or I may get nervous some night and ask for another man. And no booze!"

"Oh! Oh!" mimicked Harding, as he pulled on his overalls. "Well, let me tell you something, Mr. Big-guy—no son of a pop-eyed right-sider's going to preach to me—or boss me, either. Don't want anything to do with you—you're yellow."

Corbin allowed the slur to pass; it was no time or place, nor was Harding in any condition to realize what he was saying.

As the freight extra backed upon the passing siding at Farmington Junction that night, the General Manager's special, which had been following from Hersley, pulled up to the water-plug. Corbin, after bringing his train to a stop, climbed down from his seat and walked to the side of the engine facing the station.

It was nearly one o'clock in the morning. C. H. Bennett, the General Manager, was still awake, however, and still smoking nervously on the rear platform of his car, where he had been since the train started from Hersley.

His thoughts were not pleasant, and as he saw the outline of the cars drawn in on the passing siding and heard the throbbing note of the air-pump on Corbin's engine, he rose, spoke a few words to his conductor, and sauntered over toward the train on the siding. An engine was always an irresistible magnet to the General Manager, who had worked his way up, step by step, from the cab of a locomotive.

His voice was the first indication Corbin had of the General Manager's presence, and the engineer had heard that voice enough times during the investigation that had followed his accident to recognize it instantly.

"How's she steaming?" asked the General Manager.

"Fine, Mr. Bennett," answered Corbin. "I've got a boy that can get every pound out of this Mogul, although he's new to the game." Corbin was not one to withhold praise because of a personal matter, and Harding, for all his inexperience and surliness, was one of the best firemen Corbin had ever had.

There was something about Corbin's voice that was familiar to the General Manager, and he peered up at the form outlined in the gangway.

"Let's see," he puzzled. "You're——"

"Corbin," supplied the engineer.

"Corbin! Of the Southern. Why, you went back on your regular run, I understood." The General Manager's voice was curious.

"I asked for a transfer," explained Corbin. "Thought under new surroundings—well, to tell the truth, I felt I had lost my nerve, and I'd be better able to get it back up here."

"Don't let it get you, Corbin," said Bennett, earnestly. "Most all of us who've handled an engine have had to fight it one time or another. And how are you making out?"

"Well, I have got to the point where I can laugh about it."

"Hm!" mused the General Manager. "That argues good."

From the direction of the engine at the water-plug came the click as the spout was swung back from the tank-hole to the side of the track.

"Wish you luck, Corbin," said Bennett, as he turned and started toward his car.

Corbin watched the portly outlines of the General Manager's form until he had climbed aboard the steps of his car. He saw the conductor's "high-ball," and the special began to move from the station. Then came his own "go-ahead" signal from the brakeman standing at the switch to the main, and Corbin started for his seat, then stopped as he saw some one coming up the steps from the ground. It was Harding, who five minutes before had been asleep upon his seat, in a half-doze or stupor.

"Lost my blamed glove out the window," Harding explained thickly. "Had to go out the other side, 'cause you blocked the gangway, talking to your particular friend, the G. M."

Corbin made no reply, but climbed to his seat, and the long freight train began to move from the siding.

Harding's story of the lost glove Corbin did not believe. He had heard him speaking the General Manager's name, probably, and had gone from the cab to escape discovery of his condition.

Ten miles outside the yard limits at Mason was a long curve that hugged a rock-blasted embankment on one side. This curve had been the one stumbling block in the complete restoration of Corbin's nerve, for halfway of the curve was a block signal that could not be seen until the first bend had been passed, and until the train was forty or fifty feet away from it.

It was the custom for the fireman, from whose seat the signal was first visible to "call it off" to the engineer. It was an electric automatic block signal, controlled by the contact of the wheels with a wired rail.

It had been upon Corbin's mind each night, as he felt the first lunge of the engine as it took the curve, "What if the block's against me and there's another train ahead? Can I stop in time to avoid an accident?"

Half-ashamedly he had run his train around that curve at not over ten miles an hour. Tonight he was determined that this last stumbling block would be removed, and he took the curve with only a slight application of air to the brakes, barely enough to steady the train as the wheels lunged at the guard rails.

Harding was standing upon his deck watching out ahead for the position of the signal. The exertion of firing had sobered him, and brought back the same old sullen manner.

Suddenly he shouted to Corbin as the light became visible, "Green! All right!" Then, as Corbin hauled the throttle out a notch, Harding yelled:

"It's red! Slam her! Slam her! There's tail lights beyond."

A panic seized Corbin's nerves as he shut off and jammed the air valve into the emergency. One hasty glance he took from the window before him. Behind the cars were bumping, with jangling brake rigging and grinding brakes. Ten feet, another ten! Would the brakes never hold? Would they never grip the wheels to a stop? Fifty feet more they would be by the signal and into the train beyond. Then upon the whistle Corbin began to beat the short, sharp blasts of the danger signal, "Brakes! Brakes! Brakes!"

At the first note of the whistle, the head brakeman, who had been asleep upon the fireman's seat, tumbled off. It was the signal of danger to which every railroad man's brain is tuned. He stood at the gangway, hesitated for a second, and looked at Corbin, through whose mind was reoccurring the scene of his previous wreck. He could feel the rails giving beneath him, hear the crash of the cars behind as they piled themselves one upon the other in a shapeless mass of twisted iron and wood——

"Jump! Jump!" shouted Corbin, as he sprang wildly from his seat. The head brakeman waited for no second bidding, but climbed down the steps and swung himself off to the roadbed. As Corbin started to follow, Harding blocked his way.

"I've—I've made a mistake," he faltered. "It's green—the block—it's green."

For a moment, his brain fired by the images of his overwrought nerves, Corbin could not believe. Then, as he forced his eyes toward the black pole above which the signal shone, he saw it swing from green to red, as the engine struck the connecting rail.

What had become of the tail lights of the train beyond? The signal had been at red, for he had first seen it in the one quick look he had given from the window at the fireman's cry of warning.

CHAPTER IV.

A DISREGARDED SIGNAL.

IT WAS not until the following morning that Corbin was able calmly to review the occurrence of the previous night.

It might have been the mirage of overwrought nerves, these signals of danger—but after all, had it been his mind that called them forth? Harding had seen them, then——

The more Corbin puzzled over the matter the more his mind became confused. It was possible that it was a trick of the nerves in his case, but Harding——

In any case, he knew that he had failed at a critical moment, he had lost his nerve completely at the fireman's warning cry. Wat it worth the fight to struggle on, when failure came at the moment success seemed certain?

The bustling life of the street was what Corbin sought; he wanted the crowds about him, human companionship. As he walked aimlessly along the crowded sidewalks, stopping occasionally to glance in some store window, his mind was occupied with the one question that absorbed him to the exclusion of all that was passing about him. Now that he knew his nerve had failed him, should he give up or fight on?

Then he was brought suddenly from his abstraction as he collided with some one at an intersecting street corner. It was upon the face of his fireman, Harding, that Corbin fixed his startled gaze. Then, as his eyes moved to the face of the young girl by Harding's side, he started. It was the face of the girl of his dreams, since the adventure of the previous Sunday night at Hermon Beach—the girl of the adventure.

Corbin's heart leaped. Would she recognize him and speak? But there was no recognition in the eyes that rested upon him a moment idly, then turned away. She had not remembered him.

As he lifted his hat and mumbled a few words of apology, he caught a look upon Harding's face that he could not quite understand. Had it been fear?

He watched the two as they walked off; then, a short distance away, a man whom he had no difficulty in recognizing

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as Morphy joined them. It was with frank curiosity that he watched as they moved away, the germ of a suddenly formed suspicion in his mind. It was the first he had seen of Morphy since his encounter with the fireman in the roundhouse, where Morphy had threatened to get back at him.

Corbin's mouth set in a hard, determined line. There was no further question in his mind now as to whether he should continue in his fight for the control of his running nerve.

Harding's manner that night was a puzzle to Corbin, accustomed as he had been to the fireman's sullenness. Several times on the trip to Mason he spoke to him, and Corbin somehow gained the impression that it was of the changing signals of the previous night that he wanted to speak, although his talk conveyed no hint of it.

Corbin was emboldened by his manner to a question as to the identity of the girl he had seen upon the street with Harding, the girl whose chance encounter had raised an image in his mind that, quixotic as it was, would not be easy to displace.

"Rather a nice little girl, you were with today," he said questioningly.

Harding scowled, although this could not be seen by Corbin. "A friend of mine," he explained. Although the engineer waited expectantly, the fireman made no further comment, and there had been something about his manner that caused Corbin to drop the subject.

As they approached the curve, the scene of the previous night's occurrence, Corbin shot a quick glance toward his fireman, who had climbed upon his deck and was peering ahead. There was no reduction of speed as the engine took the curve, and the heavy cars lumbered along behind it.

"Green," Harding called, with his gaze still fixed ahead.

With one hand on the throttle, the other on the air valve, Corbin waited. As the engine swung around the bend where the rocks sloped to the level of the roadbed and the signal became visible, Corbin saw that it was green. With his eyes fixed steadily upon that shining emerald-like light, he waited until the engine struck the electric connection and the light swung to red.

Again Corbin cast a quick glance in his fireman's direction. Harding was climbing slowly from the deck.

There was a heavy train at Mason that night for Hersley. Corbin wheeled it from the yard, and with a down-grade to Wareham, pounded his engine along at a speed that caused Billy Marvin, the conductor, to remark to his flagman:

"Don't look so's that funk out to Long Curve last night, got that head-ender's nerve. He certainly is piling 'them."

"Huh!" commented Johnny Casey, the flagman. "He was that stared last night. 'Jump!' he hollers, 'Jump fer yer life!' And it was nothing at all—at all!"

Corbin, in the engine, with his gaze fixed ahead, saw the headlight of some train on the northbound passing siding at Wareham. Then, as his engine with a roar clattered by, fifty feet ahead a red light appeared upon the track and waved quickly back and forth, to disappear as the engine rushed by the spot.

Again the whistle called the danger warning, and as Corbin jammed the air into the emergency application, he felt some one touch his arm, and as he turned quickly he saw Harding, his face lighted by the glow from the open firebox door.

"Forget it," Harding said tersely, and turned away to his seat.

For a moment Corbin stared at his fireman. The waving red light had been the signal of danger. Had there been a wreck? Was there some obstruction ahead? Or——

Still staring at his fireman, Corbin reached for the whistle lever, and as the two short blasts of "off brakes" followed, he moved the air lever back to running position, hauled out on the throttle, and the long train rolled forward.

For ten minutes or more the following morning Corbin studied the crew board at the roundhouse, upon which were posted the names of men assigned to the various runs. The manner in which he turned away proved that he had found that for which he was in search.

CHAPTER V.

AN UNEXPECTED ENCOUNTER.

ALTHOUGH Corbin watched his fireman closely that night, he found nothing which would confirm the suspicion he had formed. Harding showed his resentment of this surveillance by the scowls he cast from time to time toward the engineer.

There had been nothing said between the two men in regard to the occurrences of the night before. Corbin would have liked to question Harding, but the latter's manner warned him that he would be rebuffed. Harding had his own reasons for keeping silent.

One question Corbin did ask, however, as the engine stood at the head end of their train in the Mason yard, "pumping the air."

"Belong to the Locomotive Firemen, Harding?" he inquired.

Corbin could not see the flush that crept into Harding's face. "Sure," he growled through the throbbing note of the air-pump. "Sure! What of it?"

"Nothing," evaded Corbin. "Curious, that's all. Never saw you wearing a button, or a charm——"

"Say, look here," snapped Harding, angrily. "I'm sick, good and sick of your butting-in. Take it from me—cut it out! You've got some job to look out for yourself."

"I suppose that's a threat?" asked Corbin, quietly.

"I ain't afraid to tell you what I think to your face, anyway. You may be able to get away with that stuff about coming to the Northern to get back your running nerve—there may be those that'll fall for it—but you're too darned intimate with the G. M. to suit me."

"What gave you the idea, Harding, that I'm a 'spotter'?" Corbin flared out angrily.

"Save your talk!" snarled the fireman. "Who reported me the other night to the roundhouse foreman? Who was talking with the—with Bennett, the other night at Farmington Junction? I don't stand for any underhanded work, but I'm going to get back at you, believe me."

"Listen!" snapped Corbin, as he saw a lantern come bobbing along toward the engine, and knew it was the conductor with the train orders. "You may think you're right in all this, but you're letting your dislike run away with your reason, boy. If I'd reported you to the roundhouse foreman, you wouldn't be working now. As to Bennett—well you know better. If you don't stand for underhanded work, what——"

"Here's your 'flimsy,' Corbin," interrupted the voice of Billy Marvin, from the ground below, and Corbin turned and reached down from the window for the train order that the conductor held up to him.

A moment later the long train began to move from the yard, the head brakeman climbed into the cab, and the conversation was not resumed. Corbin still watched his fireman's movements closely, however. Nothing happened that night out of the usual course of events.

The extra did not run on Sundays, although there was a possibility that Corbin would be called to take out some other train, and as he had planned a trip to Hermon Beach for that day, with the secret hope that he might again see the girl who had figured in the adventure of the previous week, he left for the beach on an early car, to be out of the way of the caller.

There was plenty of interest to occupy his attention, although the Beach had not as yet sprung into its full Sunday activity. After a stroll along the cottage-lined bluff and among the stalls and attractions, which were making preparations for the rush day of the week, Corbin headed down the beach, toward a ledge of rocks that jutted into the water.

Reaching this point, he climbed upon the top, stretched himself upon them in a comfortable position, and for a while watched the sails that glistened on the water before him, or traced the course of some passing steamer, the while his thoughts were busy with the events of the previous week.

He knew now that he was no coward, that he had not lost his running nerve, but he also knew that the men of the Northern Division had heard and were talking about the occurrence at the block signal outside of Mason. It was not difficult to surmise what they were saying. He had no doubt that they had heard of the later event of the red light. He had a score to settle—some one would pay for this yet.

From the beach below him came a low whistle. He turned and saw at a short distance a girl. He was not sure—then his heart leaped. It was the girl for the sight of whom he had come to Hermon Beach. A dog was scampering down the beach toward her.

From the bluff above came the screech of a trolley car whistle. Then Corbin heard the scrape and fall of gravel and stones, as a man slid down the soft embankment to the beach, where he turned and came toward the girl, who stood waiting his approach. He was not sure at first, then as the man came nearer, he saw that it was Harding.

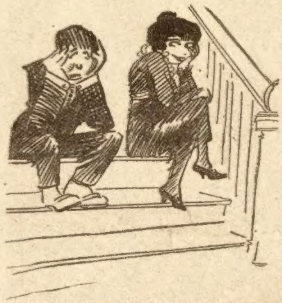
Corbin realized that he had been placed in a bad position. It was evident that neither the girl nor Harding was aware of his presence. If he remained where he was or disclosed himself, in either case Harding would believe that he was spying upon him.

He rose; it was better to be accused of being an eavesdropper, than to stay and be one in reality. The climb to the top had been made with some difficulty; it seemed that the opposite side afforded an easier descent, and Corbin started for that point, then stopped in amazement at what he saw below. Halfway down the ledge a man was crouched behind a jagged point of rock, peering out in evident interest to where the girl and Harding stood upon the beach.

In the one glance Corbin had recognized this man as Lewis Morphy. Instead of continuing his descent, Corbin stepped back and waited.

Next week's Ledger will contain the concluding chapters of this remarkable story. You will miss a great treat if you do not read it to the end. We will give you constantly the very best stories of entertainment that money will buy, so send in your subscription and take the Ledger regularly, if you are not doing so. You will not regret it.

* * *



Percy Pinfeather—"And I couldn't get a word in edgewise."

Polly Pickles—"Perhaps your conversation was too dull."

* * *

The New Reporter.

The New Reporter (going to the telephone and ostentatiously starting the machinery)—"Hello, central! Let me have 2745 C, please. (A pause.) You giddy little thing! No. I said twenty-seven. Twenty-sev—— Hello! Is that 2745 C? Is Mr. Sawgertees Devoy in the office? Will you tell him that Mr. Jefferson McAddister would like to speak with him? Yes, that's the name, McAddister, journalist."

(The other reporters listen in awestruck silence.)

The New Reporter—"Is this really Mr. Devoy? My name is—— Ah, you recognize my voice? You perhaps remember that I interviewed you yesterday? What's that? Best report? Oh, thank you! You're very kind. I tried to make it so. Has anything turned up in regard to that case since noon? Well, sorry to trouble you. Eh? Dinner? You're extremely kind. At Sherry's? What? And a bottle? (Surging interest in the entire staff.) It's awfully kind of you. Well, say Tuesday at eight. But really I——"

City Editor (in his everyday voice)—"I have some work here, McAddister, when you are quite through talking to yourself. That telephone has been disconnected since morning."—Puck.

* * *

Sorry for Him.

A street car flirt tried in every way to attract the attention of the pretty young girl opposite him. Just as he had about given up, the girl, entirely unconscious of what had been going on, happened to glance in his direction. The flirt immediately took fresh courage.

"It's cold out today, isn't it?" he ventured.

The girl smiled and nodded assent, but had nothing to say.

"My name is Specknoodle," he volunteered.

"Oh, I'm so sorry," she said sympathetically, as she left the car.

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MRS. JOSEPH CONSTANCE,
Avoyelles Par. Marksville, La.

Personally appeared before me, this 11th day of July, 1911, Mrs Joseph Constance, who subscribed the above statement and made oath that the same is true in substance and in fact.

WM. MORROW, Notary Public.

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I will tell you gladly and willingly. Why should any woman neglect an opportunity to escape the pain and heartache of being skinny, scrawny, angular and un-attractive in body? Misery is not our heritage. Nature planned that you—a woman—should have the rich, pulsing lines of warm, living flesh molded after the mother of us all, the description of whom, perfumes our sacred literature with love and admiration for the divinity of woman's form. For why should there be that pitiful aspect—the face of a woman and the form of a man.

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Just write me a letter—address it to me personally—that's all. I will answer it by return mail—and you can develop your bust one ounce a day—you can be what you want to be. Believe me when I say that you will bless me through years of happiness for pointing the way to you and telling you what I know. Please send your letter today to the following address:

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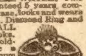

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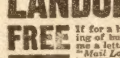

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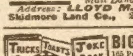

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The Spider Conquest

Or, Gurlock's Wizard Work - By Will Lisenbee

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CHAPTER IV.

AS THE sun sank behind the walls of the forest and the great white cathedral loomed ghostlike against the purple sky, an air of dread hung over the city.

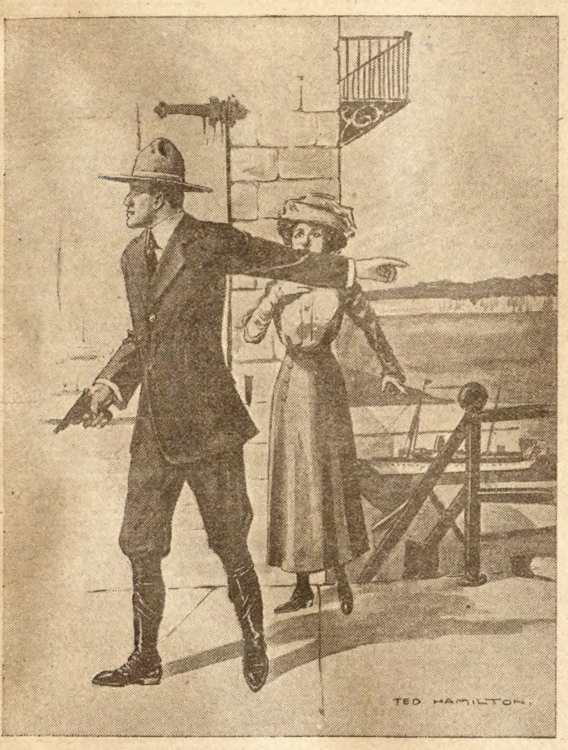
Not yet recovered from the panic and terror of the previous night, the people who were abroad in the streets seemed depressed with a sense of impending calamity. They moved hurriedly and silently hither and thither, glancing furtively about, as if fearful of encountering some deadly danger. Everywhere windows and doors were doubly screened, and traffic was almost at a standstill. The shops were for the most part empty, and the theaters were closed.

In the lobby of the hotel the guests stood about in little groups discussing the all-important topic—spiders! The evening papers were being read everywhere with eager interest, by those who could read Spanish, and the foreigners who were unable to do this hung breathlessly over those who could read and translate the latest news regarding the new menace to human life.

Fifty deaths were reported as a result of the invasion of the swarm of spiders the night before, and an equal number had gone insane from the effect of the bites of the spiders. It was believed that the recent storm had put a stop to the ravages of the pests for the time being, but this was only offered as an opinion based on no authentic information.

The gravity of the situation made Delbert Ffrench all the more anxious to discover the whereabouts of Dr. Gurlock, that he might offer the scientist and his daughter safe passage out of the country on board the Princess. Every hour's delay now multiplied the danger, and it was the intention of Delbert to get out of the country at the earliest moment possible.

He had spent money lavishly in his search, employing a swarm of officers and detectives to give him assistance, but as night approached, he and Dart returned to the hotel, having failed to get any trace of the missing ones. After a hasty supper and a brief conference, they left the hotel to renew the search.


TED HAMILTON.

They reached the pier.

Delbert Ffrench fully realized the stern necessity of Gurlock keeping his presence in the city a secret. His life no doubt depended on it. And in fortifying himself against being discovered by his enemies, the American scientist had also cut himself off from his friends, who were anxious to come to his assistance.

Delbert had but little hope of success, but there was nothing left for him to do but keep up the search while there was still time. It might be said that his sole hope for success lay in the little personal he had inserted in the evening papers, printed in English, which read:

> "Important notice! The Princess is waiting to carry you home! Hotel Royal or Pier 9.
>
> "DELBERT FFRENCH."

This notice, printed in large letters, appeared in many places in each of the evening papers. He did not dare say more, for he did not want to rouse suspicion among the inhabitants who were not of a trustful nature. And he felt confident that should the notice fall under the eye of Gurlock or Dorothy, they would understand. So, in view of the possibility of a response to his notice, he had directed one of the crew of the Princess to remain at the pier with a boat, so as to be ready to carry them aboard at once should they appear there, and at the hotel a trusted man was kept in waiting, who was instructed to conduct them to the pier and have them sent aboard the Princess immediately, should they appear at the hotel.

But now as night came down no word had come from Gurlock, and no response had been made to the notice printed in the papers.

The yellow moon had swung up over the wilderness of forests, shimmering on the turbid waters of the Rio Negro as Ffrench left the hotel. He was accompanied by a native interpreter, and he intended to go to various residences in the city and present his card, with the request that it be given to the American staying there.

It was a bluff that he fancied would bring the desired result, should he happen to present himself at the house where Gurlock was staying, but so far he had only succeeded in getting into some queer adventures which would have been amusing under different circumstances.

As Ffrench was leaving the hotel, there was a quick step behind him, a hand was laid on his shoulder, and a low voice asked, "Mr. Ffrench, can I have a word with you?"

Delbert turned. The speaker, who had addressed him in English, was a young man of thirty, broad of shoulder, with a face tanned by the sun and wind of the torrid zone. A single glance convinced Delbert that the stranger was a product of the great West of the United States.

"My name is Dan Newton," went on the stranger, "and I am making a guess that I can furnish you some information that will interest you."

"Then I shall be glad to have it," assured Delbert, taking the extended hand. "Come to my room."

He led the way into the hotel and up to his room. He turned on the lights, pushed an easy chair to the visitor, and took one himself.

"I saw your little notice in the paper this evening," said Newton, "and by putting this and that together I got a hunch that I might help you a little by getting into the game. You see, I am from God's country, like yourself, and a man that's got as much of a soul as one of them South American anteaters will stand with one of his own countrymen. But maybe we can git to the nub of this thing a little quicker if you will tell me if the notice you had printed in the papers this evening had any reference to the high-browed individual that's bin kinder helpin' God run things by puttin' wings on the spiders?"

"If you mean Dr. Gurlock, yes," smiled Delbert.

"That's the man," nodded Newton.

"You know where he is?" asked Ffrench, eagerly.

"I have an idea I do."

"And his daughter?"

"He has a daughter with him?"

"Yes—that is, he did."

"There's a woman with him all right, but I didn't know she was his daughter."

"You have seen them?"

"Never laid eyes on either of them in my life."

"Then how do you know that——?"

The visitor put up his hand. "I see that I shall have to tell you the whole story, if we are to git started right. Got time to listen?"

"All the time in the world," assured Ffrench.

"That's good. But I'm not going to use it all. The story may be a little long, but I'm going to give you the headlines to sort of relieve the pressure, which the newspapers put out something like this: 'News of the Great American Highbrow! It is rumored that he and his lovely daughter are being held prisoners in an unoccupied mansion on San Vincente street, in Manaos!"

"Good heavens! Do you mean that?" cried Ffrench.

"Every word. I'm from Texas, you see, an' they sometimes kill a man for lying on purpose in Texas."

"Who is holding them prisoners? And what is it being done for?"

"I'll let you answer these questions when you have heard my story. I'm not a first-class guesser, else I wouldn't have got mixed up with the Peruvian Rubber Company and got it in the neck. That's why I'm here and rubberin' a bit to get my bearings. If I had been wise, I'd have stayed on my ranch in Texas. As I wasn't, it happened that while I was in New York, selling a bunch of polo ponies, I fell in with Nathan Fielding——"

"Nathan Fielding?" cried Delbert, in amazement.

"Nobody else. He is president of the Peruvian Rubber Company and talks of seven-figure deals as easily as I would of calves. It didn't take him over fifteen minutes to show me how I could make a million in a month, and I fell for it like a man that needs the money—only I wanted to size the critter up at close range before I let loose of what the Texas ranch had put to my credit. That is how I—and a bunch of others—happened to come to Manaos at just about the time the Boston person was pinning the wings of the South American spiders.

"Now this plan of Fielding's looks mighty good when you listen to his spiel, and are smoking one of his dollar-apiece cigars. He puts the whole thing up like this: That the common rubber tree is fast becoming extinct on account of being overworked by the rubber trust, or something of the kind, and that it had at last become necessary to find some other kind of a tree that hadn't been milked dry that would produce a sap that could be made into rubber. The necessary tree, Fielding went on to show, had been found, and this Ginko tree, or whatever it was he called it, grew as thick as dogfennel all over the upper Amazon basin. In proof of this he had a piece of the wood and some of the rubber said to have come from one of the trees.

"The whole thing was as plain as day,

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after you had heard Fielding's story, and so I and a bunch of others came down here to take a look at the layout and gather information. We came to Manaos and put up at this hotel, where we met Mr. Barrington, a big L.L.D. and Ph.D. and a lot of other initials, who used to run the U. S. Weather Bureau and the Smithsonian Institute and the Panama Canal, but who had given up all these jobs to get into the Peruvian Rubber Company. He wore a pair of big goggles to keep the equinoctial sun out of his eyes and to keep us from seeing him wink at Fielding when he was giving us the proper dope.

"This Dr. Barrington explained the whole matter to us in such a frank and friendly way that it seemed like a shame to put him to the trouble. After he had got through we were taken into a private diningroom, where a banquet was spread for us, and we were filled up on champagne.

"We talked a lot and some one sang a song, and I don't remember just what happened after that for a while, for I fell asleep in one of the easy chairs. When I woke there was no one in the room excepting Fielding, Barrington, and myself. I guess they had overlooked me entirely, and they were talking very confidential, and about something that waked me up pretty suddenly. There was a screen in front of me—one that had been pushed there by some of the waiters, I guess, and the two didn't see me.

"'I'm afraid we may be balked in our plans if something isn't done,' were the first words I heard. It was Barrington who was speaking.

"'Why, what is in the wind?' asks Fielding.

"'You remember Ferguson who came down a week ago?'

"'Yes.'

"'Well, when he got here I explained the whole matter relative to the Peruvian Rubber Company's plans, and showed him the proofs. He was well satisfied, or seemed to be, and promised to put ten thousand into the pot. Well, he was knocking about the city and fell in with a man from Boston, an old friend. The man from Boston was none other than the famous Doctor Gurlock!' At this Fielding swore a little.

"'This Boston scientist,' goes on Barrington, 'has dabbled in a little of everything that is scientific, and he tells Ferguson, so it seems, that he had been investigating the matter of obtaining rubber from the newly discovered tree, and pronounced the whole thing a fake.'

"'The h——l he did?' swore Fielding.

"'Yes, but that is not all. Gurlock is going to prepare a statement, claimed to be based on scientific experiment, showing that the claims of the Peruvian Rubber Company are utterly at variance with the facts, and this document is to be given out for publication.'

"Say, you ought to have heard Fielding swear. I wouldn't have believed it of him, being such a polished gentleman and all that sort of thing. But I began to see a light.

"Well, Barrington and Fielding said a whole lot more, most of which I have forgotten. But among other things they said something about putting Gurlock out of the way till their schemes were perfected and carried into effect.

"By this time Gurlock was in the mission building north of the city, where he was making some experiments tending to put the spiders out of business, or something of the sort. I soon learned that Fielding had gone to pay Gurlock a visit. Then came the excitement over the spiders in this region, and following this was the assault made on the scientist. And last night, after the storm, Fielding and Barrington came to the hotel. They came into Fielding's room, which is next to mine. They were talking, and I managed to overhear some of their conversation. I could only catch the drift of their talk by putting this and that together. But I gathered that Fielding had been in company with Gurlock and the girl, and that he had lured them to an unoccupied mansion on San Vincente street, and that they were being held as prisoners there, on the pretext that it was the only way to prevent violence being done to Gurlock by the people. You see, the officers of the law here are in Fielding's pay—that I found out from what Fielding said—and the officers are now on guard there, advising the scientist that it is necessary to do so to prevent a riot and save the lives of Gurlock and his daughter.

"They are sure a sweet bunch—the Peruvian Rubber Company—and it is a lucky thing that I got onto their curves. I guess Fielding went to see Gurlock to try to talk him out of giving the rubber company's graft away. Maybe he ran up against a snag, not being able to bribe the Boston person who don't seem to be out for the coin, and so he puts up a scheme to git him out of the way. To show you how slick a hand Fielding is playing, he has not let Gurlock discover his duplicity."

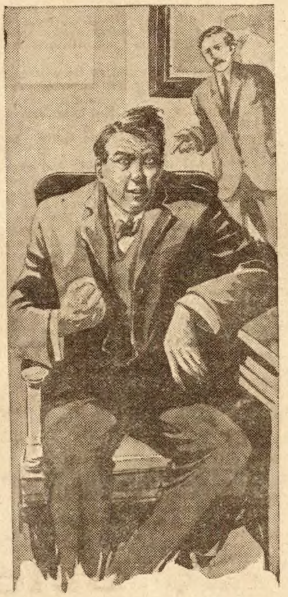
"And Gurlock and his daughter still believe Fielding is their friend?" said Ffrench.

"There's no doubt of it."

"And how did you find out that I was interested in finding Gurlock?" asked Ffrench.

Newton laughed. "I almost forgot that," he said. "It was plumb funny. I heard Fielding tell Barrington that the Gurlocks were anxious to leave the country, and that they expected the arrival of a friend from their own country—Mr. Ffrench, with his yacht, the Princess—and so when I saw your notice in the evening paper I began to understand. It was a funny situation, for the police you have been employing to help find Gurlock have been in the employ of Fielding all the time. Talk about the grafting of the New York police! Why, these white-coated cops of Brazil have got the New York variety skinned a mile and a half.

"Now we are getting down to the real issue. There is no doubt in my mind that I can locate the mansion in which Gurlock and his daughter are being held as prisoners. But what do you propose to do about it?"



"If we can escape!"

"What I propose to do," said Ffrench, "is to move upon their works at once."

"We can't get the police, and couldn't trust them if we could get them into the game."

"I see. We must play a lone hand."

"Have you got a gun?"

"One of the most approved American pattern."

"It may not be needed, but one must take no chances."

"I have been thinking," said Ffrench, "that if I could see Fielding for a moment I could show him that the best thing he can do is to lay down his hand."

"No doubt of it, but he and Barrington have disappeared and they were careful not to leave any address. Fielding is a smooth crook, and you never know where he is when out of your sight. But just for luck I'll run down to the office and see if I can learn anything of his whereabouts."

Newton had been gone but a moment when Donald Dart came in.

"Well, I have run my man into a hole at last," he said.

"You mean the man Fielding?" said Ffrench.

"Yes. It cost me a little money to get the information, for those simple children of nature in this country expect to be paid, but I got the information. That is not all. I think we have got the people we want bunched again, so I have come to let you in on the windfall."

"That's fine!" cried Ffrench. "It may be that we have struck the trail at the same time. I have just had a visitor—Mr. Newton of Texas, who has been a prospective victim of the Peruvian Rubber Company, and he has given me a tip. He thinks we'll find the whole outfit at a residence on San Vincente street."

Dart laughed. "You almost beat me to it," he said. "It is as plain as day that we have now got a line on the rendezvous of Mr. Fielding and his associates, and at the same time will find Dr. Gurlock and his daughter. We're in luck."

"It seems so. What is your plan?"

"To raid the house and nab Fielding if he proves to be there to nab. I have a warrant."

Ffrench smiled. "Do you think you can have the officers of the law serve a warrant on a man who is paying them to help him with his schemes?"

"Well, one has got to try," laughed Dart. "It may be that I can outbid Fielding. I believe those fellows will work for the one who pays the highest wages. At any rate, I have two officers who will accompany me to the house, and I'm going to see to it that they give me something for my money before I pay them. If you want to join us we'll be ready to start in a half-hour."

"Sure thing, I'll go," said Ffrench. "In fact Newton and I were planning to descend upon the mansion on San Vincente street immediately. We had decided it was best to see if we could locate Fielding and get a word with him first, but as you have discovered that he is now at the mansion on San Vincente street, we shall not need to wait any longer. I shall be ready to go at the appointed time, and Newton will accompany us."

CHAPTER V.

IT WAS nine o'clock when the motor car carrying Delbert Ffrench, Newton, and Captain Moddington left the hotel and was driven swiftly northward toward San Vincente street. Following close behind came another car containing Donald Dart, the detective, and two officers. The two cars were driven rapidly, and separating at a point three blocks north of the plaza, they approached San Vincente street from opposite directions.

At a signal from Newton the first car was stopped as it turned into San Vincente street, and Ffrench, Newton and the Captain got out, and leaving the car in charge of the chauffeur, they walked rapidly in the direction of a large mansion near the center of the next block north. At the same time Donald Dart and the two officers were approaching from the opposite direction.

The mansion stood in the center of spacious grounds, which were shaded by palms that half hid the building behind their feathery walls. Ffrench and his companions entered the grounds and walked through the deep shadows toward the rear of the building, while Donald Dart and the two officers entered by the front gate where the guards were stationed. No gleam of light came from the gloomy mansion, and if there was any sign of human life about the place, it was obscured by the black shadows that enveloped it.

Ffrench and his companions were making their way toward the rear door, when they were attracted by a cry, sharp and piercing, that came from the direction of the plaza. They paused in the shadows of the trees and listened.

The cry was repeated, and it was instantly echoed by a chorus of other voices that cut sharply through the silence of the night. Faintly, now, came the muffled sound of many feet, as if an army, put to flight in sudden panic, was rushing through the city.

"By thunder! What can that mean?" cried Newton.

"The spiders!" said Ffrench. "Good heavens! Just listen!"

The sound of rushing feet swelled into a prolonged roar, and amid the tumult there rose a staccato of screams, prolonged and appalling. Something struck Ffrench on the arm with a soft thud and fell at his feet. He struck a match and bent over it. A great tawny spider lay writhing in the grass, broken and crippled by the compact, its dull eyes turned upon him with baleful glare.

"Great heavens!" he cried, crushing it with his foot. "We must look out or we'll share the fate of the victims of last night's swarm of the dreadful pests."

"That's a sure thing!" cried Newton. "Let's get to shelter."

The three men hurried to the wide porch and took shelter in a nook behind the vine-covered lattice. The sound of an army of hurrying feet and the appalling cries that cut above it all told the story. The spiders were making another raid on the city! The men ensconced behind the wall of vines listened to the tumult and realized their own danger.

The panic-stricken crowd was drawing nearer and nearer, and now dark forms could be seen fleeing like shadows through the darkness. The great red moon which was coming up from behind the tops of the distant trees threw a weird light over the city; and out in the street, where its rays lay in yellow bars between the black shadows, a swiftly hurrying crowd of people could be seen rushing like a turbulent stream along the street.

The whole crowd seemed to have gone mad. Rushing onward, dashing hither and thither, seeking shelter wherever it could be found, the crazed inhabitants came onward like a rushing wave, their shrieks and maddened cries of pain and terror rising in a hideous tumult.

And now, above the seething mass of humanity, whirling and turning like leaves swept by a gust of wind, an immense swarm of yellow spiders hovered in the air, now rising and now descending like angry bees, and darting into the crowd as if in vengeful fury. It was a strange and appalling spectacle, and the three men standing in the shelter of the porch were thrilled with a sense of horror as they witnessed it.

A moment more and the crowd was spreading like a fan, and a detached

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mass, like a black wing, swept into the grounds surrounding the mansion, and with shrieks of terror dashed toward the house.

Ffrench was standing close to the wall by a window, when a dark mass of struggling and fighting beings swept down upon the building. In an instant they ran like a wave onto the porch, and the next instant Ffrench, who stood on the defensive, was struggling in the midst of a writhing mass of maddened creatures.

Delbert realized the danger of being caught in the vortex of such a crowd, and instinctively he flung himself to the left, and caught one of the vine-wreathed columns that supported the veranda; then he drew himself up swiftly, while the struggling mass beneath rushed in a living torrent against the door.

As he did this he cast a quick glance downward and saw Newton and Captain Moddington, who had avoided the rushing crowd, slip quickly around the house toward the front. Then he drew himself upon the veranda and stood looking down at the tumultuous crowd below.

The purple-winged spiders, still turning and whirling through the air, filled all the heaven, as far as his eye could reach. And now they were settling very near to where he stood, and as a swarm of them dipped in his direction, he made a quick turn and flung himself against a door at his left. It gave way under his pressure, and he half fell into a hallway. Putting out his hands blindly, he steadied himself by clutching the wall, and finding himself in total darkness, he stood for a moment irresolute

The terrified cries coming from below brought to his mind the fact that a deadly danger menaced him, and he turned and closed the door behind him.

The house was as silent as the grave. He struck a match, and by the light of the tiny flame made his way along the wide hall toward the front of the building. His quick glance showed him a number of doors opening into rooms along the hall. The woodwork was of mahogany, richly ornamented with carvings around the lintels of the doors; and a little farther on a sumptuous stairway, ornate with the highest skill of the wood-carver's art, led to the story above.

Ffrench had barely time to take inventory of all this when the match went out, leaving him in darkness. He paused, and turning, groped his way to one of the doors and knocked. No response came, and he moved on in the direction of the stairway.

He felt his way along the hallway, not daring to waste another of his scant supply of matches, and reaching the foot of the stairway, he paused for a moment to listen. He fully believed that, if Dr. Gurlock and Dorothy were being held as prisoners in the mansion, they would likely be found in the upper story; consequently he ascended the stairs, groping his way with his hand on the rail.

On reaching the landing above he paused and stood listening intently. Still there was no sound to be heard. Had the old mansion been deserted? Delbert Ffrench was ready to believe that such was the case. But now, as he turned about, he caught sight of a thin ray of light. It was no bigger than his finger and lay in a shining bar along the floor. He moved toward it cautiously, groping his way through the black darkness.

As he drew near he discovered that the ray of light came from a keyhole in a door. He also noticed that the ray was obscured at brief intervals, which convinced him that some one was in the room behind the door.

He paused for a moment irresolute. The faint sound of footsteps came from within the room as if some one was walking back and forth, but there was no other sound. This led him to believe that whoever the inmate of the room was, he was alone.

He walked to the door and knocked. Instantly there was silence in the room. He repeated the knock, and then a voice came from within—a voice that he recognized with a sudden thrill of joy. It was the voice of Dorothy Gurlock!

"Who is there?" the voice quavered.

"It is I—Delbert Ffrench, Miss Gurlock!" cried Ffrench, speaking in a low tone and coming close to the door.

He caught the sound of a quick-caught breath and a little cry of pleasure.

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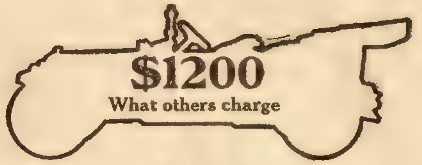

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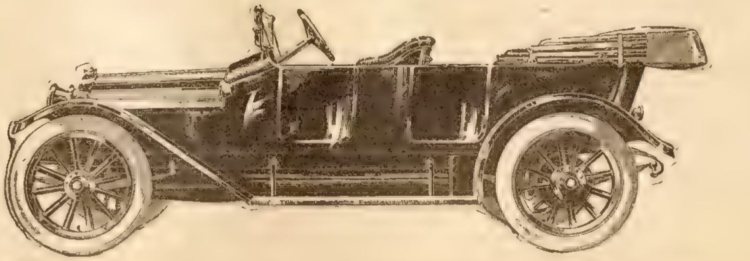

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"Oh, Mr. Ffrench! Thank God you have come! I—have-been so dreadfully frightened!"

"Are you alone?" asked Delbert, anxiously.

"Yes—they left me locked in this room. Oh, Mr. Ffrench! It has been a dreadful experience!"

"Good heavens! Where is your father?" cried Delbert.

"I don't know. He went away with Mr. Fielding—to escape the mob, they told me, but I don't understand. I'm afraid something dreadful has happened——"

"I don't think you should worry," said Ffrench, reassuringly. "We shall look into the affair at once. But just at present we must investigate this door."

He tried to open it, threw his weight against it, but it would not yield.

"I shall have to find something with which to force it," he said.

He struck a match and looked about him. By a window nearby he saw a heavy chair, and seizing it, he used it as a batteringram. But it required many sturdy blows to break the lock. However, at last it gave way and the heavy shutter swung open. Ffrench sprang into the room and grasped the girl's extended hands.

"I have been searching for you and your father everywhere," he said. "The Princess is lying in the river ready to carry us out of this barbarous country."

"You are so good!" she murmured. "Oh, if father were only here! We have had a terrible experience, and I fear that something has happened to him."

"We will find him, never fear, and then we'll go aboard the Princess and put for the open sea—and for home! But come! We must get out of here. Hark!"

A hideous uproar came from below. There was the sound of many voices and the crash of windows being broken and of doors being beaten down. Ffrench could hear the hoarse murmur of voices, and caught the import of the vengeful cries of the people, which told him that they had in some way learned that the old mansion had sheltered the American scientist—the hated Yankee who was the author of the great calamity that had befallen them. The maddened crowd was already forcing windows and doors, and the place would soon be swarming with vengeful horde that struggled for admittance.

"Great heavens!" gasped Dorothy. "What does this mean? Can it be that they have learned that my father was here and are searching for him?"

"If they are," said Ffrench, evasively, "luckily they will be disappointed. I think it will be best for us to get out of here while we can. In the confusion, we can easily evade them. Come!"

He led the way to a door which opened out onto a veranda. It was not locked, and opening it, they passed out. Ffrench had a vague idea that the veranda might offer some avenue of escape, for already he could hear the tramp of many feet in the rooms below and the hoarse cries of the mob which had forced its way into the mansion. Many, no doubt, had come for vengeance, while others had entered for the purpose of gaining shelter from the invading spiders.

As Ffrench glanced about he perceived that the night had grown intensely dark, and a vivid flash of lightning, followed by a sharp peal of thunder, told him that a storm was about to burst upon the city.

The gleam of lightning gave Ffrench a brief glimpse of his surroundings. At the end of the veranda, almost against the sumptuously ornamented iron railing, the swaying branches of a great tree gleamed white as frost under the lightning's blaze. That tree might offer a means of descent, Delbert was quick to believe, and with Dorothy's trembling hand lying on his arm, he groped his way toward the end of the veranda.

Another flash of lightning showed him that a large limb of the tree extended along the railing and might be reached easily enough. But he was not sure that the girl, in her frightened condition, would not shrink from the danger of such a means of descent.

They were now standing close to the railing, and Ffrench stretched out his hands toward the swaying limb as the lightning blazed again, and explained to her how easy it would be for him to make the descent with her, if she would be brave and only trust him to bring her safely to the ground. To his surprise and pleasure, she expressed her willingness to be guided by his advice, and she assured him she was not afraid in the least.

"I have passed through so many perils in the last few days," she murmured, "that such as this seems mere play."

"That's fine of you!" cried Delbert. "We shall make the descent as safely as if we had gone down by the stairs."

He leaned over the railing, and stepping to the ledge outside, stepped easily to the swaying limb. Then bidding her cling tightly to him, he made his way carefully down the sloping limb to the trunk of the tree.

They were not a moment too soon. Already the sound of rushing feet could be heard on the veranda they had just quitted, and the vengeful cries of the baffled mob blew down to them on the fitful gusts of wind. The crowd had poured like a maddened flood into the mansion, and the hideous clamor within told a story of wreckage and plunder.

But many dark forms could be faintly seen rushing through the grounds, and Ffrench and the terrified girl remained in the branches of the tree, not daring to descend till the coast was clear.

Where were Newton and Captain Moddington? This question came to Delbert Ffrench as he peered through the darkness at the swarm of dark forms beneath. He had no doubt that the two men would take care of themselves, for in the darkness and confusion it would be easy for them to escape detection.

And in the meantime, the storm which had been rapidly approaching, burst in all its fury over the city! A perfect deluge of rain, driven almost horizontally by the tempest, swept over the mansion, and the blaze of the lightning, the crash of the thunder added to the clamor and terror of the night.

Clinging to the trunk of the tree, sheltered by the walls of the building, Ffrench and his fair companion did not venture to descend. And it was not till some hours later, when the storm had, in a manner, abated, and the grounds cleared of the mob, that they attempted to leave their refuge.

Through the still falling rain, which had for the time being disposed of the spiders, Delbert Ffrench and Dorothy Gurlock made their way to where the automobile had been left in waiting, only to find—as Delbert had suspected—that it was gone. An hour later they reached the pier and were taken aboard the Princess.

The first rays of the rising sun were lighting the yellow waters of the Rio Negro as Ffrench and Dorothy stepped upon the deck of the Princess. To the surprise of Delbert, Captain Moddington came forward to give them greeting. He shook hands with Delbert and lifted his hat to Miss Gurlock.

"Surely fortune and good luck have favored us!" he cried, "for while you have been so fortunate as to bring Miss Gurlock with you from the mad city, we have been equally fortunate in finding her father, who came aboard the Princess with us but a few moments ago."

CHAPTER VI.

IN THE sumptuously furnished office of the Peruvian Rubber Company, in New York, there was a lull of activity.

Behind a ground glass door, in his private office, sat Martin Biggs, fourth vice-president of the company, a look of worry and disgust on his rather handsome face. He was a man of some forty-five years, sleek and well-fed, and under ordinary circumstances exhaled an air of self-confidence and genial happiness.

But just at present things were going awry. The golden stream that had for months been flowing into the coffers of the Peruvian Rubber Company had been checked by the dark, menacing hand of the Law, and it was the shadow of this hand that brought the look of worry and disquietude to the face of Biggs.

The Peruvian Rubber Company had been reaping a rich harvest from the credulous who were willing to add to their accumulations by a short method of addition. The Peruvian Rubber Company, being a corporation and having no soul, did not hesitate to employ a certain amount of deception which bore a striking resemblance to loaded dice.

The promoters of the unworthy enterprise had gone on their way undisturbed so long that exceeding peace had made them bold, and having spread the snare too often in sight of the bird, the not over watchful eye of the Law had been directed to the maneuvers. And now they were under investigation by the District Attorney, and warrants were out for the arrest of certain members of the company.

And so it happened that it had been found necessary for the brilliant heads of the concern to absent themselves for the time being, which made it necessary for Martin Biggs, the fourth vice-president, to come forward and take charge of the company's affairs.

It was rather a sad occupation to sit at his desk day after day and wait to find out if the law would include him in its bill of particulars, while the servants of the court calmly opened all the Peruvian Company's mail and scrutinized it for further evidence to strengthen the hand of the law. This state of affairs worried Biggs and filled him with certain emotions which he would not have disclosed to the court.

Not the least among his troubles was the absence of Nathan Fielding, the brilliant, resourceful head of the concern, who could always see the bright side of a dark situation and discern an avenue of escape from the most ingeniously devised snares of the court.

"If Fielding were only here!" mused Biggs, but even as the thought came to him the door opened and a slouching, ill-clad figure entered.

The visitor glanced quickly about the room, and seeing no one but Biggs, he helped himself to a chair, removed a set of ill-fitting whiskers, and turned his face toward the fourth vice-president.

"Nathan Fielding! Good heavens!" gasped Biggs. He put out his hand. "An

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angel from Heaven could not have given me more pleasure!" he declared.

"No doubt about it," remarked Fielding. "With the court sorting out our mail, and at the same time looking out a short road for us to Sing Sing, the visit of an angel would create a most embarrassing situation. But how are things going?"

"The worst way. The court is holding out every blessed cent that comes to the Peruvian Rubber Company, and there it will be held for the final judicial determination as to whether it shall be returned to the dupes who sent it, or divided among the lawyers!"

"That's the worst feature of it. But you can take it from me that we are going to win out in the end."

"That's blessed good news!" cried Biggs. "But I'm afraid I shall have to ask you to show me. With the law after us at one end of the business, and the winged spiders of the Amazon playing havoc at the other, it looks as if nothing short of a stroke of Providence could save us from ruin!"

"But the stroke of Providence has already arrived," said Fielding. "That is the spiders!"

"The spiders?" echoed Biggs in amazement."

"Nothing else," assured Fielding. "They will give us a chance to show that the company was able and willing to carry out all its plans, which would have paid splendid dividends to every one who had put a dollar into the Peruvian Rubber Company's stocks, and this would have been done but for the spiders which are now driving the people to madness and stopping all business throughout South America."

"It is sure good to hear you say that," said Biggs, "and I hope it will work out as you think. But in the meantime, our business will be utterly ruined."

An amused smile played over Fielding's face. "My dear Biggs," he said, "to listen to you one would think that we were one of our credulous victims instead of one of the beneficiaries in the game. Good heavens, man alive! [illegible] you expect us to go on forever without being checked up?"

"You admit, then, that the whole scheme of the Peruvian Rubber Company is a fake?" Biggs had whirled in his chair and was looking at the other searchingly.

"What did you think it was—a charitable concern?" growled Fielding. "By George! You should have a guardian appointed!"

"I shall soon be thinking so," Biggs nodded. "Of course, I knew that there was a hazard in the enterprise, but I didn't mind that. There is always a hazard, when one goes into any kind of business—especially if it is a business with which he is not familiar. But for all that, let me say, I thought there was a bare chance!"

"Oh, well, what is the use of splitting hairs? We are all into it now, and we've raked in a pretty good roll, and if we get no more we should be satisfied if we can escape the law."

"But I shall have ruined my good name!" protested Biggs, weakly.

"Probably you got all it was worth!" said Fielding, bluntly. "You forget that I am much worse off than you or any of the rest. A price is on my head, and the officers of the law are on my trail. It may cost me a good sum to bribe them to silence, and even now they may have dogged my footsteps to this place. And what will become of my good name?"

"Oh, we'll have to make the best of it!" said Biggs. "But what are your plans?"

"I don't know. Our lawyers are doing all they can to iron the matter out with the court, and they have advised me that if we can make the proper showing they may be able to pull us out after all."

"Tell me all the news," pleaded Biggs. "I have not had a blessed word about how things are going in South America. Is it true that the winged spiders are playing such havoc as the reports show?"

"Good heavens! the half has not been told! Why, right now, it is as much as a person's life is worth to venture out of the house after nightfall in the Amazon basin. The spiders are swarming all over the country like locusts, and I want to tell you, Biggs, that this is a serious matter."

"And is it true that these spiders were brought into existence by the American scientist, Norman Gurlock, who has been in Brazil for a number of years experimenting with animal and insect life?"

"It is undoubtedly true that Gurlock is responsible for the production of the spiders. That is not all. This same Gurlock, it [illegible] had fallen in with some of the parties interested in the Peruvian Rubber Company, and he took it upon himself to investigate our claims regarding the production of rubber from the gobo tree, and made the statement that the whole matter was a fake. He was to have given out a written statement—so I learned on my arrival there—showing the falsity of our claims, when I got to him. You know that I am a pretty good single-handed talker, and I showed him a few specimens I had prepared so cunningly that he was staggered. He began to doubt his own judgment in the matter, and I did my best to keep him away from the public and from any of those who were trying to get information, and then the spiders came with a rush, and that was not all. The natives in and around Manaos, having heard that Gurlock was the author of the calamity, made an attempt to wreak vengeance on him. They attacked the old mansion building where he was quartered, and as it happened, I was there to give him assistance, and by some sharp maneuvering I managed to get him and his daughter safely out of danger. He fully believes that he owes me his life, and he is not far wrong."

"And will he keep his hands off our business?" asked Biggs.

"Well. I hope so. We tried to keep him under our charge after we got to Manaos, but the devil broke loose in the town, and the wild mob ran over us, and we lost him entirely. Good heavens! I shall never forget that night. The cries of that maddened mob still ring in my ears! We were glad enough to escape with out lives, and when we got clear of the mob we put for the river, and there, as good luck would have it, we found a vessel, the Mercedes, which was ready to sail for Obidos, and we got passage on it, but it cost us a round sum, as every berth was taken. From Obidos we took passage in the America for Oyapock, and from there we came to New York in the Utopia.

"What became of Gurlock? We never learned, but there is a chance that he fell a victim to the mob or to the swarm of spiders he had himself created.

"I thought it best to travel incognito, as the kings sometimes do, and so here I am, back in New York. I'm going to stay under cover till we can start a back-fire against the gentlemen of the law. Has there been any word in the papers about the fate of Gurlock and his daughter?"

"Nothing definite. It is generally believed that he and his daughter fell victims to the mob that night in Manaos, but that is only conjecture."

"I learned before leaving Manaos that a young American millionaire by the name of Ffrench had his yacht, the Princess, lying at Manaos waiting to bring Gurlock and his daughter to New York, but I never learned what he accomplished. Did the papers get anything about that?"

"Not a word. But the papers this evening print some startling news about the spiders."

"The deuce! What is it?"

"Why, they have risen in clouds from the Amazon basin and are coming north. They are already in Cuba and the other West Indies; and it is rumored that they have even reached Florida!"

"Good heavens! What do they think of the situation?"

"They don't know what to think. They seem to want to avoid making any guess. You see, they fear that if the situation is such that a word might start a panic among the people—and what is worse to those who value dollars above human life—it might cause a financial panic and a slump in stocks and bonds and all that sort of thing; so the papers are not putting many scare-headings on the question of spiders."

Fielding went to a cabinet, took out a bottle and a glass, poured some liquor into the glass, and drank it. Biggs, who had been glancing idly over the Herald turned toward him.

"By thunder! Listen to this," he said, and read the following brief paragraph:

"'Mr. Delbert Ffrench, the young Boston millionaire who has spent a year or two abroad, and who, it is reported, was at Manaos, Brazil, with his yacht, the Princess, when the winged spiders invaded the city three weeks ago, arrived in his yacht last night. He and his party went directly to the St. Regis upon leaving the Princess. Mr. Ffrench could not be seen, and the names of those accompanying him could not be learned. It is believed, however, that Professor Gurlock and his daughter Dorothy were among them.'"

This highly interesting story will be continued in next week's Ledger. Do not miss reading it. A lot of great and timely stories will appear in the Ledger during the coming months. Send in your subscription and you will find yourself repaid ten times over.

* * *

Port in a Storm.

Let the players sit in two lines opposite each other at some little distance apart. Then two members stand between, one of whom is blindfolded; the other, in a whisper, gives the players on one side of the line the name of vessels, for instance, S. S. Kentucky, the Maine, etc. The other side he names as different ports, such as Liverpool, Boston, New York, etc. After doing this he stands beside the blindfolded player, who is termed "a wreck," and cries aloud: "S S. Kentucky is ordered to the port of Liverpool." Whereupon the ship of that name and the port change places and the "wreck" tries to slip into one of the empty places. Then the player who calls out the changes may give "the wreck" a better opportunity by saying: "London, Boston, and New York call for aid from S. S. Kentucky, the Maine, and the St. [illegible]" In the general scramble "the wreck" usually finds a port, and the one without a seat becomes "the wreck."

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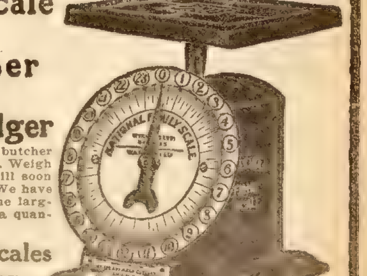

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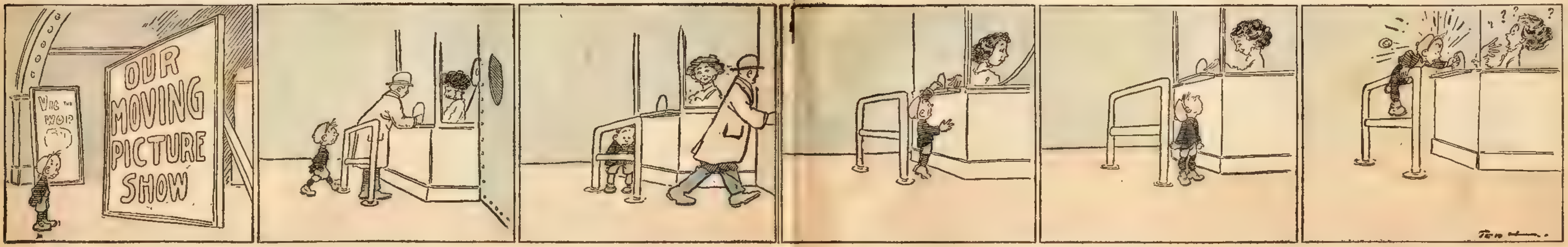
"What would you give an old sea dog to drink?"
"I think I would offer him his choice of port."

A Married Man's Resolve.

She—"Do you love me for myself alone?"
He—"Yes, and when we are married I don't want any of the family thrown in."

HE SAW THE SHOW



Dinky Tim—"Gee! I gotta see that!

"Guess I kin spare a nickel——

"Let's see, I've got a dime, and the show's only a nickel——

'Aw—I'm a sport all right! Here goes——"

The Ticket Seller—"Well, the chap that just went in left his change! That's another dime for muh!"

Dinky Tim—"Say, you graftin' ole cat, what do yer think I am? Come on wid me ticket and shell out me change!"

A Mean Man.

Six years later he returned. His sweetheart of former years has married. They meet at a party. She has changed; between dances the recognition takes place.

"Let me see," she muses, with her fan beating a tattoo on her pretty hand, "was it you or your brother who was my old sweetheart?"

"Really, I don't know; probably my father."

On the Inside.

One morning Jenkins looked over his garden wall and said to his neighbor:

"Hey, what are you burying in that hole?"

"Oh," he said, "I'm just replanting some of my seeds; that's all."

"Seeds!" shouted Jenkins angrily. "It looks more like one of my hens."

"That's all right. The seeds are inside."

Marrying at Leisure.

Daughter—"Mr. Nicechap has asked for my hand, and I have accepted."

Papa—"What nonsense! You are not old enough to marry."

Daughter—"That's the beauty of it. I will have plenty of time to look around while I'm engaged."

Crude Work.

"I should regret very much to hear that anybody has ever offered money for political influence."

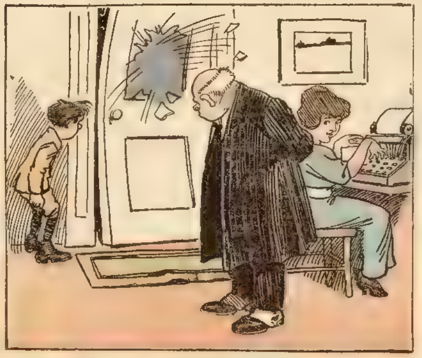
"Yes," answered Mr. Graftwell, "your hearing of it would indicate very crude work on somebody's part."

Sleeping Cake.

"Cake can sleep, can't it?" asked a boy of his father.

"No, my son; have you lost your senses?"

"Yes, it can sleep, too, for haven't you heard of ginger's naps?"

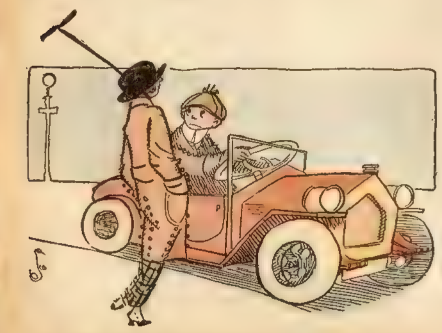


Financier—"What's all the hubbub in the directors' room?"
Stenographer—"Some wise minority stockholder just found that the office cat is on the pay roll for $3,000 a year under the name of T. Feline."

Economy.

Son—"What is the meaning of economy?"

Mother—"Economy, my son, is going without something you do want, in case some day you should want something which you probably don't want."



Man in Auto—"Will you marry me, Lucille?"
Girl at Side—"No, Charles; this isn't the make or priced car I could ride in as a wife."

Wouldn't Know the Difference.

Cook (7 a. m.)—"Please, ma'am, the dog got hold of the steak that was for breakfast. Shall I go out and get another?"

Mistress—"Is there any news in the morning paper?"

Cook—"Yes, indeed, ma'am. Big accidents an' horrid murders, an' bomb explosions, an' rumors of another war."

Mistress—"Very well. Warm over something left from supper, and place the paper by my husband's plate."—Puck

Where to Begin.

Mrs. Highmind—"I think it's a great pity that one can't find a newspaper that isn't filled with all sorts of horrible crime. We ought to have an organization to prevent such matter from being printed."

Philosopher—"Would it not be better to have an organization to prevent such crime from being committed?"

Had Practiced.

Vicar (to Mrs. Thatchbag, whose baby has recently been christened)—"Ah, Mrs. Thatchbag, I never remember any baby behaving so well in the water."

Mrs. Thatchbag—"Lor, sir, that was because me and Jim 'ad been practicing on 'im for about a week afore with a watering-can."

Rough on Harold

"My love!"

"Yes, Harold?"

"What did your mother say when you told her you were engaged to me?"

"Said she knew the silly season was about due."

Puzzled Him.

Buddy Boy—"Mamma, Bridget called me 'the broth of a boy.' Does she mean I've been in the soup?"

Just the Man.

"Now, min," said the Irish foreman after the accident, "we will hov t' hov some wan t' break th' news gradual t' Mike's woife. Who wull we sind?"

"Send Hanrahan," said Casey; "he's just th' mon t' break it gradual. Look how he shtutters."

Overindulgence.

"My wife will know I drank too much at the banquet."

"Why, you are walking straight enough."

"But look at the bum umbrella I picked out."

KILLING TIME.

Old Time would like to pass away,
With agony we fill him;
For there is not a single day
That we don't try to kill him.

Identified.

Visitor—"You remember me don't you, little man?"

Bobbie—"Of course I do. You're the same man pa brought home last summer an' ma got so mad about it she wouldn't speak to pa for a whole week."

His V[illegible].

"Do you believe that women ought to vote?"

"Sure. And what's more I think men ought to, too."

A Different Ending.

"Had quite an adventure lately. Gave an old gentleman my seat in a street car, and he insisted on taking my card."

"And now he wants to give you $25,000, eh?"

"No; now he wants to sell me an encyclopedia on dollar payments."

A Catastrophe.

Farmer (to autoist who is on his knees by the machine)—"What's the matter. Busted your buzz wagon?"

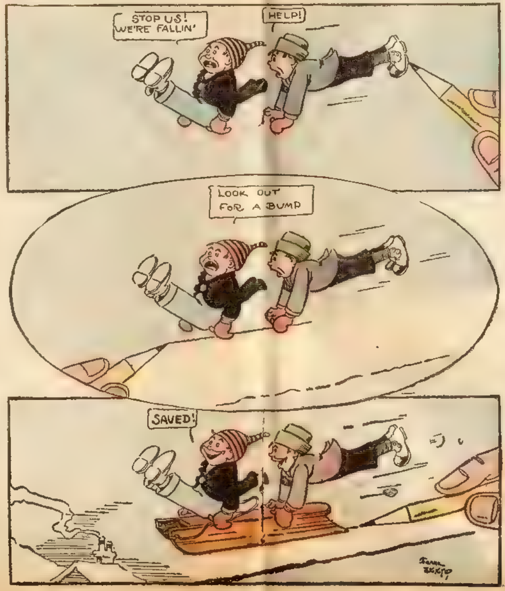
Autoist—"No. Just run over a chicken and punctured a tire on the pin-feathers."

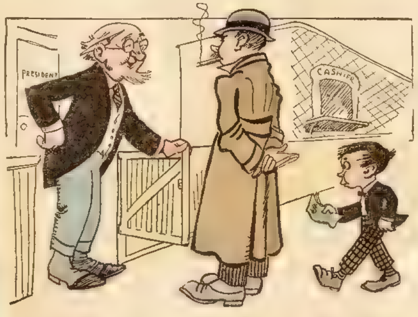
Hang the Expense.

"Is your new beau good to you, Mame?"

"Good to me? I should say he is! He picks out the ten-cent movies to take me to."

ARTIST FOOLINGS


STOP US! WE'RE FALLIN'
HELP!
LOOK OUT FOR A BUMP
SAVED!



Village Banker—"We got t' be purty careful around these banks."
Traveling Man—"Taking precautions, I suppose!"
Village Banker—"Yep. If the office boy stays out more'n fifteen minutes t' lunch we begin examinin' his books."

The First Step Taken.

Jimmy Martin, after running a barber shop for two or three years, decided to become a dentist. His Uncle Si, upon hearing of this decision, dropped in to talk it over.

"Yes," he agreed, "dentistry is about the easiest new job you could take up, Jimmy. You know how to work the chair already, so the rest ought to come easy enough."

It Might Come True.

"You've been out of work for a long time, you say?"

"Yes, lady. I'm a very unfortunate person. Why, just th' other night, ma'am, I dreamed that if I went to a certain place I'd get a job shovelin'."

"And did you go?"

"No, ma'am. I didn't care to chance it."

A Place for Everything.

"Bobby, my son," exclaimed the dismayed mother as she saw all her boy's belongings stacked in a corner of the closet, "haven't I tried over and over to teach you that you should have a place for everything?"

"Yes, mother," said the boy cheerfully, "and this is the place."

Fact.

"And what have you learned in your travels?" asked the sage. "What knowledge have you gained?"

"Well," replied the rolling stone, "I have discovered that if you want anything well done you must order it rare."

Illustrative Dances.

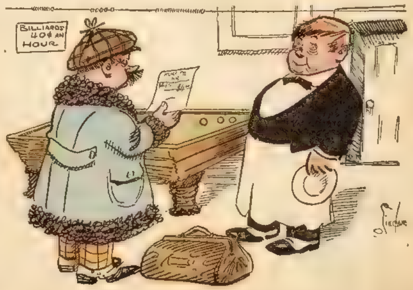
"Dances used to originate from tribal customs."

"Well, doesn't it seem possible that some of these popular dances tend to illustrate the movements of persons dodging a flock of motor-cars?"

Discrimination.

Proprietor of the Clarion (angrily)—"What did you mean by telling 'H. B.,' the man who asked if there was money in mushrooms, that there would be more money for him in toad-stools?"

Editor of the "Question and Answer Department" (with air of one who knows he is in the right)—"Because, sir, I looked up 'H. B.' in the directory and found he was an undertaker."



Traveler—"How's this? The only place you give me to sleep is a billiard table, and you charge me $4."
Hotel Proprietor—"But you see the notice, sir—billiards 40 cents an hour; ten hours' sleep $4."

A Wise Precaution.

Mrs. Capron informed her husband one morning that she expected a party of guests that afternoon. Immediately Mr. Capron arose and put all the umbrellas away much to his wife's astonishment.

"Why, Walter, do you fear my guests will steal your umbrellas?" she asked in an injured tone.

"No," said Walter as he closed the closet door. "I'm afraid they'll recognize them."

Insult Qualified.

"Take off your glasses, sir. I am going to thrash you."

"Why?"

"At the Republican rally last night you called me a polecat."

"I did not say that you were a polecat, sir. I said that you were a political polecat."

"Ah, that's different. Come and have a drink."

In the Regular Way.

The colored porter approached a genial gentleman from Missouri the other morning as a through train was nearing Englewood station, and, smiling, asked: "Shall ah jest bresh yo' all off, sah?"

"Not on your life," replied Mr. Missouri, "I'll get off this train in the regular way just as soon as she stops."

A Surprising Number.

Mrs. Smith was on her first ocean voyage. "What's that down there?" she asked of the Captain.

"That's the steerage, madam," he replied.

"Really!" exclaimed the woman, in surprise. "And does it take all those people to make the boat go straight!"

Trouble Ahead.

Johnny—"I'll get even with ma for spankin' me."

Tommy—"Aw, what'll you do?"

Johnny—"One o' these days I'll everlastin'ly whale her grandchildren."

The Biting Sword

Or, For Mademoiselle's Sake By Victor Ardmore

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CHAPTER X.

THE HOUR OF THE SWORD.

THERE are moments when a multitude of thoughts pass like a lightning flash through the mind, and it was such a moment as I faced Captain Blair. Sir John's ill-advised obstinacy had led us into the presence of Mademoiselle's enemy; he undoubtedly had his followers near, and rapid flight in the woods at night was impossible. How, then, was the lady to be protected?

The surprise was not all with us, for Blair stared blankly, but he was a quick-witted knave, and he wasted little time in idle looking. Into his eyes came the light of triumph, and he drew his sword with a jerk that made blade and scabbard ring tunefully. Then he stepped to the very threshold, almost thrusting himself against Sir John, and looked where the outside darkness lay thick.

"To me, men!" he shouted. "This way, at once. Hasten!"

I caught at the situation. Only two fellows were with their leader in the room, but there must be more in the adjacent woods, so the complication looked ugly for us. With two women to protect we could muster but three swords, and we would be between two forces.

This must not be, and I made my decision promptly. Whipping out my steel, I beat up Blair's weapon, and drove at him so sharply that he fell back to gain space for defense. This was exactly as I would have it, and my orders rang clearly:

"Inside, all! Follow me, and we will get the advantage of them. Inside, all, I say!"

There was no loitering among our enemies, and in a twinkling I was engaged with three men, which, as it was not my wish to place my back anywhere near the wall and make it a long fight, was certainly inclined to keep me busy, but Sir John was not backward in the crisis, and his entrance to the drama was not far ahead of Hugh's. One man I had managed to pink slightly before help came, and it was he that our stout servant took on bravely.

Of the three only Blair was expert, and the baronet disarmed his opponent almost at will. My plan did not allow a protracted meeting with the Captain, and I put all the impetuosity of my blade into the attack, and disarmed him as I had done once before. By then Hugh was also victor.

I heard the steps of running men outside, and knew that instant work there was necessary.

"Hugh," I cried, "I see ropes yonder that are ready for you. Ask the help of Sir John and tie these knaves up tightly!"

With this I ran outside. I was just in time to meet a half-dozen of scoundrels who came with bared blades, and mischief was in their look and manner. The light from inside fell on brutal faces and gleaming eyes, and I knew I had to deal with cutthroats who would deserve all I gave them.

With my back to the entrance I met their rush, but for a moment they bade fair to overturn me ere their legs could be controlled. Unable to stop they ran full upon my sword, and, as I could not drive at the whole lot at once, nor withdraw from the body of one in time to lunge at the next, it was a brief problem.

None of their number really wanted to die, and, as soon as possible, they gave proof of the fact.

By the time the first two had fallen, the rest stayed their speed, and I had them at my face, only four to one, which was not discouraging odds. Indeed, it would have mattered nothing to me had there been a score as far as getting at me was concerned. Frankly, I was the Biting Sword, and my blade was before me.

For fellows of their sort they did rather well. Not one could have stood up before an expert swordsman, but they had a rude knack, and they jostled each other for place and hacked at me tremendously. Sometimes it took my best agility and twist of eyes and muscles to meet the various thrusts, for some were cowardly lunges aimed under the elbow of a comrade, so I had bare points darting at me all the while, but, on the other hand, I raised a wall of steel before me, and they could not pass my guard.

Only three were left on their feet when Sir John joined me, and as he came into the fight zealously, they decided they had enough of the affair, and took to their heels without ceremony.

The baronet looked at me and unclosed his lips, as if tempted to give a word of praise to one who had beaten off a combined attack that would otherwise have undone him and his, but he thought better of it and said nothing.

I was not sorry. Before that night I had more than once stood side by side with an ally and fought the enemies of the moment until, united by bonds of grateful recollection, he and I were friends forever. I had no ambition to be comrades of the sword with Sir John.

Hugh came running out.

"All are tied up, Master Stelland," he announced, "save that man Blair. He leaped from the window and has escaped."

Afterwards, I knew the escape had been due to the baronet's carelessness, but nobody mentioned it then.

"So!" I cried, with a laugh. "We are not so easily taken as they imagined. Good Hugh, I thank you for your lusty stand with me. Now, what shall we do next? We can hardly continue in the woods with uncertainty as companion—not yet, at least."

Mademoiselle appeared at the threshold.

"Will it not be well," she asked, "to bring our horses inside? We cannot afford to lose them."

"Well advised," I returned. "Small as the place is, I imagine there can be a room set apart for them, and the door is surely wide enough for their entrance. Hugh, will you see to it?"

"There are no more men inside," pursued the brave Mademoiselle. "I have searched the whole house."

"Excellent!" quoth I. "You are invaluable, madam. This, then, shall temporarily be our fort. Let us see whom we have here."

I looked the wounded over, and, seeing that one was bent on creeping away, slapped him playfully over the shoulder with the flat of my sword. I had ever loved to jest with foes who bade fair to live to be grandsires.

"Be done with it, knave!" I said lightly. "Man was not born to crawl like a snake. Tarry with us until I have taken the list of the hospital force. Ay, go inside and be tied up—your hurt is a mere toy to amuse your childhood."

By this time Hugh had done his task, and I smiled and nodded to him.

"Labor for us, lad!" I continued. "We have wounded men to care for. My good Anne, scurry around and see what we can command of lint and bandages. There is hope of saving all hands of them."

Sir John had been standing silent. It had not occurred to me in the delight of the affray that I was the central figure of this small affair, but so it was. In time past it had often been said that the Biting Sword was never so happy as when there were rascals to overwhelm and handle, and there was something in it. Averse to bloodshed when it could be avoided, I surely did fall into high spirits when a fight was afoot. Yes, I had forgotten myself in the charm of the engagement, and overlooked the baronet, but he came to the front now.

"Do you actually mean you will dress the wounds of these vermin?" he cried, astonished.

"Yes," I replied.

"Let them bleed to death."

"That would not please them. Ah! Anne, you are speedy," I added, as she came running with bandages.

"I protest," declared the baronet, hotly, "against letting these scoundrels live. They tried to kill us, and they are the foes who have deliberately annoyed Mademoiselle. She admits as much. It is idiocy to save their vile skins."

"Sir John," I said, temperately, "it has ever been my way to deal mercifully with an enemy who is down. I'll fell him as readily as another, but the wounded deserve sympathy from us. We will dress their hurts."

"Then let us call ourselves idiot surgeons for the disciples of murder!" he retorted bitterly. "Before we are in New Haven we shall have them hacking at our backs and seizing Mademoiselle."

Here was a new view of the case, and I stopped short, undecided. What if my plan did really bode ill to Mademoiselle?

CHAPTER XI.

I AM BESET.

IT WAS Mademoiselle herself who settled the question. She shook her head in negation of the last words, and quickly replied:

"Men wounded as seriously as these are wounded will do no harm to any one for a fortnight, so we need not fear them. Meanwhile, let me do my part in this act of mercy."

She caught up the bandages from Anne's hands, and stood ready to do as she said. Sir John gasped in consternation, and I was not content that one of her rank should act the nurse to such scum, but the baronet's frown settled it with me. I sounded no remonstrance.

"Hugh," I continued, "we cannot be sure of much time here. Be so good as to go outside and learn what Captain Blair and his remaining knaves are doing. I am not wholly satisfied to be penned up here, and it may be to our advantage to leave at once."

He went, and with the help of Mademoiselle and Anne I dressed the hurts of our enemies. They looked at me oddly, plainly amazed that I should treat them otherwise than as the dogs they were, but not one of them commented. While we worked, Sir John paced back and forth near the door, his scowl as black as ever. It had been the last stroke of the hour when the lady stooped to what he regarded as such low business.

We had just finished when Hugh came running back, his manner that of excitement.

"Mischief breeding!" he cried hastily. "Blair has but few rascals left now, but there are more within an hour's ride. It seems they are ambushing along the regular road to New Haven. It is his plan to fetch them here posthaste, and he has already sent a messenger by horse."

"They wait by the New Haven road, you say?" questioned Mademoiselle.

"Yes, mistress."

"That shows what would have happened to us had we not taken another route," she added.

I felt that this was for Sir John's ears, but I was too busy to dwell upon the point. We were nearer the road than I had supposed, and if we stayed to meet their attack it would go hard with us.

"At what quarter is Blair?" I asked.

"Yonder," and Hugh pointed. "He has all his fellows at his side, and is relying on our remaining in this house."

"We must resume our journey!" cried Mademoiselle.

"Impossible!" gasped the baronet.

She sent me a glance that questioned closely.

"For one I am going!" she then declared. "Shall I remain here to court certain disaster when they have gathered fresh numbers? Not I? Sirs, I long for the shrewd nip of the autumn air. It has lost its dread. Who stays here? Who goes with me?"

Sir John's face purpled with anger, but he were a dolt had he not read the determination in his ward's face and manner. And I—words cannot tell my delight. For the moment it had been prudent to get into the cover of the house, but to stay now was folly. With swords, possibly muskets, and, perhaps, incendiary torches opposed to us, we should make a poor fist of it huddled betwixt walls.

"Hugh, let us lead out the horses!" I said cheerfully.

The baronet shot me a venomous glance, but neither then nor in the hour that followed did he speak to me.

To avoid notice we stove a hole in the rear wall and led our animals out by that opening. I tarried to place water

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"Then my doctor, who drinks Postum himself, persuaded me to stop coffee and try Postum. After much hesitation I concluded to try it. That was eight months ago. Since then I have had but few of those spells, none for more than four months.

"I feel better, sleep better and am better every way. I now drink nothing but Postum and touch no coffee, and as I am seventy years of age all my friends think the improvement quite remarkable."

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within reach of the wounded, making sure no man should want for it

"Master," said one of the lot, looking at me oddly, "either I or you are a fool!"

"All men," I returned, smiling upon him, "are born fools. Some outgrow it."

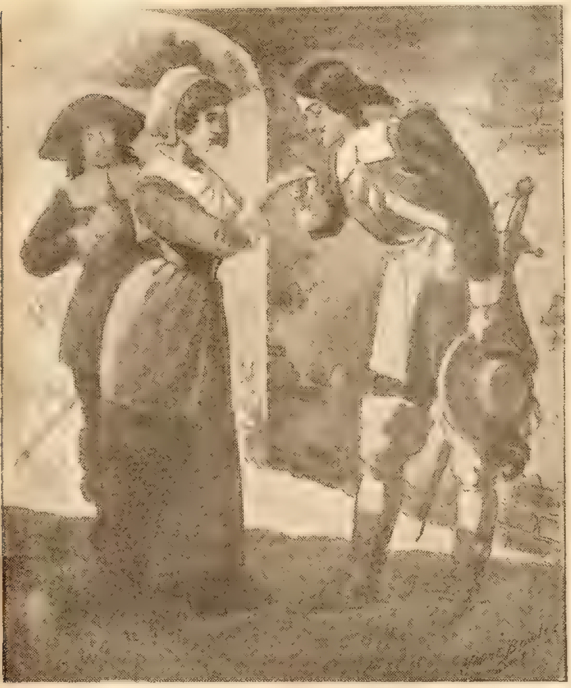
"That's what I am going to do," he exclaimed quickly

"Sir," added another, "I thank you for ill-deserved kindness."

"May you have luck as good as your future deeds, and no better," I replied, and turned away and left them.

Did those who scorned my habit of seeing that minor knaves did not bleed to death after I had wounded them have it right in criticising my way adversely? Perhaps, but I always felt better for knowing I had done a little deed of charity when I could

We were ready, and we crossed the field to the woods as softly as possible We went with swords bare, for discovery seemed almost certain, but Captain Blair missed a point when he relied upon our sticking to cover. Also, he missed us for then.



"You will be Lady Madeline Vallencourt!"

Now, we had been traveling as near east as I could lay our course, but Hugh's testimony showed that this had been taking us hazardously near the road, so I made a bold play of it and headed due north. This was again plunging into the farther woods, and I expected the baronet to remonstrate sharply, but the end proved that he did not know of the change.

For the first time in our flight I used some woodsman's tricks to blind our trail, at one point walking the horses half a mile in a muddy brook, for I feared pursuit acutely. Thus far our foes had been oddly dull, but I could not rely upon this continuing.

I do not like to dwell upon that ride, for, in spite of the full day of rest preceding it, 'twas a time of hardship for Mademoiselle and her maid, but there was no complaint uttered. They bore up with fortitude, and the lady never relaxed her cheerful manner, again proving herself a brave and charming companion

It was a surprise when Sir John, too, avoided complaint, but his silence was that of sullen anger. I looked for more trouble with him in the immediate future

The night was far spent and we were a long distance from the house when I finally called a halt. We were in a rocky region where small cliffs and ravines predominated, and I was not slow to recognize its adaptability to defense if need came

My heart was beset with pity for Mademoiselle, for the nipping wind was surely sorely trying, and, against my better judgment, I made a fire in a rocky pocket and brewed hot drinks for all. They were needed

A few minutes after eating was over with the women were asleep, and Sir John was in his blanket. Hugh and I delayed to put the finishing touches to the preparations for the usual idle day After that I bade him, too, lie down, saying that I would take the first watch.

Day was dawning, and, anxious to see our surroundings fully, I climbed to the highest adjacent point and scanned the outlying territory. I saw woods everywhere, but small hills and depressions made a diversity of outline, so it was hardly a dull sameness. I spied out the way we had come, and saw no enemy on our track, though they might be near and unseen. Also, I took heed to the east, where we must travel when next we proceeded.

Being in no mood for useless stay on the elevation, I did not linger, but presently I toiled down and was in the bed of a gulch. Descending, I had given small heed to my surroundings, but as I looked up after planting my feet on safe ground, I saw Sir John Rodcliff not five yards away. This was a surprise, and the next minute I knew it was something more. He was looking at me with more hostility than ever, and it boded ill for a peaceful interview.

"I have waited for you," he said, his voice cold and even.

"Yes?" I returned briefly.

"An understanding between us is imperative. In the interests of peace I have endured your slights, your opposition, your insults, but it can continue no longer. I am the legal protector of Mademoiselle, the equivalent of her guardian, though she is of age and I claim no written paper to show for it. Nevertheless, I am in this Colony in a legal capacity, and to aid her. What do I find?"

I made a gesture, disdaining reply in words

"She has been kidnaped and hurried into the wilderness, and by—you!" He paused briefly and stared at me superciliously. "By a man called the Biting Sword"

"I think," I said composedly, "we have already covered that ground."

"We have. There is, however, more to say Did you see the packs opened this morning?"

"Did I?" and I eyed him in perplexity. "What about that?"

"You did not see, for you were brewing the drinks. I saw. Ay, Sir Biting Sword, I saw the casket of jewels!"

"Well?" I interrogated.

"Knowledge of them is denied by Mademoiselle, by her maid, and by the man Hugh. There remains only yourself."

"Proceed!" I directed coldly.

"The jewels were stolen!"

Opportunity was offered me for a natural retort, but I disdained trivial hits at his armor and passed it by.

"Well?" I again questioned.

"I have questioned the servants closely, and they, like Mademoiselle, declare they do not know either the owner or how they came in the pack. I have already told you that, though not dwelling in this Colony, I have been at the house of Monsieur Francois Rombouts. I will add that I know something of Mynheer Winckle and his friends. The jewels belong to a sister of Winckle, newly come to New York."

I bowed in silence

"The jewels did not enter the pack of their own volition, nor can I mistrust Winckle's servants. There remains only you, Sir Biting Sword! Why did you purloin them?"

He shot the question at me intemperately, and I knew why he had followed me to the gulch. Face and eyes alike pressed insult upon me, and he watched closely to see me wince. I disappointed him, for I was as calm as ever.

"I have answered this question to Mademoiselle," I replied, "and that ends it until we reach New Haven."

"It does not end it! he declared fiercely. "I charge you with being a thief! No one who remained at Winckle's would pack off ten thousand pounds in brilliants. There remains only you. Adventurer, kidnaper, broiler, liar, and thief! That is you!"

Plainly, we had reached the crisis in our affairs

CHAPTER XII.

WITH THE SWORD

I HAVE said before that, smarting under Sir John's insults, I would have pulled his nose and then had it out with him with the sword, had it not been for Mademoiselle. Until she was safe it was no time for brawling and dueling. I had endured much patiently, but he was now passing the limit of consideration. It pleased me that he, heretofore haughtily cold in our wordy contests, was now in open temper, but this only made me the more composed.

"We agreed to leave matters between us as they were until we reached New Haven," I reminded him steadily. "Once there I will give you your fill."

"You called me swashbuckler!" he cried hotly.

I smiled in real amusement. When I flung back the word by innuendo, after he had applied it to me on a former occasion, I had hit through his thick skin, and I suspected that, seeking for a motive for the present trouble, I need not go beyond the epithet. It was not strange, for "swashbuckler" galls even callous hides.

"That," I said, "was when you boasted"

He was about to speak, but thought better of it, acting, instead. With a rapid motion he attempted flinging a glove in my face, but my eye and hand were too quick for him. Catching it midway I prevented the disgrace, but the attempt rankled

"What do you want?" I asked.

"To fight you to the death, here and now! I am a baronet and a gentleman, and the ethics of the duello absolve me from crossing swords with a low adventurer, but I waive the point. We will fight."

"Sir John," I returned calmly, "from the time we first met you have heaped insults upon me—insults that, but for Mademoiselle's safety, would have led me either to tweak your nose or horsewhip you offhand, for I am not a patient man under such undeserved treatment In agreeing to your proposition now I

(Continued on page nineteen.)

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The Biting Sword

(Continued from page seventeen.)

honor you, not you me, for the whipping should come first. Do you still say fight? If so, I yield the point and am at your service."

"Keep in mind," he added, his old cold manner replacing temper, "that you are to die. Men call you the Biting Sword and credit you with some skill, but your efforts will be like a child's compared with mine. I learned the art at the capitals of England, France, and Italy, and my reputation is great. You will be nothing in my hands. Make ready to die!"

He flung off his coat and I followed his example.

"The word 'swashbuckler'," I remarked, as if absent-mindedly, "is defined as a bully and low boaster"

We were too near the engagement for the thrust to hit as before. He met it with a steady smile, and I felt the least thrill of admiration, not for the man but for his firmness

Ready, we touched blades. Perhaps he had a prayer for success, but mine was that sounds of the encounter would not reach our camp

For a while we played with each other, trying to guess respective methods and points of weakness. In that preliminary I learned that Sir John was, indeed, a master of the sword. It was in his play, and in his quick, resolute eyes, deft touches, and elastic muscles. I knew it was no easy matter to best him, but I had my reasons for ignoring his claim that he had all the tricks and finesse of the European courts. I had some of these things, too, though where I learned them is not of moment now.

The preliminary ended. He made a fierce lunge that carried his sword-point close to my side, though it was easily turned. Then we were at the joust with zeal. Blow responded to blow, and thrust to thrust, but on each side the parry was neat and effective.

There is small need to dwell upon our encounter. For full five minutes there was no advantage to either, but there was delightful music in the gulch. The steel sent out clamors that rang respondent from the belting rocks, and stray birds paused to look down and marvel that while they hunted for little game with their stomach in mind, man, the only real barbarian, lusted for blood with only his passions to serve.

It was rare pleasure to watch the ebb of the baronet's over-confidence. As he tried trick after trick and failed, it came home to him that it was no easy task to disarm the despised Colonial, and he had no more to say about the ways of European courts.

Surprise, indecision, chagrin, and something near to dismay marked his expression, and that was my first step toward success Even then I gained the goal of my hopes slowly, for I had no special device in reserve. I had tried my best and failed, but if I had learned any one lesson well in life, it was that to succeed with the sword one must try and keep on trying.

The end came suddenly. One moment the issue was on the knees of the gods, the next I had seen an opening, and, before my lunge, flirt and twist his weapon went ringing against the wall of rock. He was disarmed before me. I lowered my point and looked him steadily in the eyes.

"You know the rules of the game," I said quietly.

He extended his arm from his breast. "It was to the death!" he said coolly.

I pointed to the fallen sword.

"Pick it up," I said, "and let us return to the camp."

"But——"

"There is no 'but'," I interrupted coldly. "This has been but a beginning. I despise you too much to consider that your death pays the debt."

"Had I won I would have killed you."

"Small satisfaction. Get your sword."

He eyed me doggedly for a moment, though without abating his hostility. He saw no forgiveness in my face. A further pause, and then he shrugged his shoulders and went for the weapon. We walked to camp side by side and in silence.

All there were asleep. Sir John lay down and drew his blanket over him. Perhaps he slept.

Three hours later we breakfasted, and I was glad to see that nobody bordered on collapse. Mademoiselle, the keynote of our journey, was almost as fresh as when she left New York, and her well-chosen lightness of manner and cheerful courage did more than sleep and rest to ease the stress of the hours.

By noon we had all secured necessary sleep, and we only awaited the fall of another night to press forward again. It was a satisfaction that, even with the time lost in making detours, one more move ahead would take us almost to the end of our travel.

Between Sir John and myself outward relations were unchanged. No allusion to our encounter passed between us, neither was more civil, and, as I afterwards knew, nobody else had any suspicion that we had met in open hostility.

Really, the main point was that though the baronet owed his life to my forbearance, he hated me as bitterly as before—probably more so

As time passed I came to feel that we might risk a start before dark for once. We were on Connecticut soil, and New Haven was a magnet that drew me hard. By a bold push and some extra efforts we might arrive before ten in the forenoon, and I was not sure our foes would follow to the end.

I laid my plan before Mademoiselle and received her hearty approval, which settled it. For the baronet's wishes I cared nothing. With this decided upon I started preparations for supper, and again climbed to the cliff to survey the outlying ground.

Nothing there worried me, so I returned to camp. Nearing it, I did not at first see Mademoiselle and Sir John, and I knew why when I came upon them midway in earnest conversation. He was speaking.

"This will soon be over, and then you will be Lady Madeline Vallencourt," he said, lifting his hat.

"This title means little to me," she replied, "but I confess that I shall not be reluctant to pass my life at Collamore Castle"

"The old castle awaits you. Its lord and his sons did themselves an ill turn by being slain, but to you it means position with the nobility."

These words came to me before they saw me and before I could make my presence known, but I clanked my sword in its scabbard, and they saw me and stopped. Even Sir John could not accuse me of listening, but they had no more to say on their subject. I passed a few words with them, and then, saying I would look at the other outskirt of the camp, went my way quietly.

Less than three score words had come to my hearing, but I now knew the name of my charge—and more. I wanted to be alone. Mademoiselle was placed on a new footing, lifted to a lofty height, and I—have I not already said I wanted to be alone? I went—to think!

The conclusion of this interesting story will be found in the Ledger issue of next week. If you are not a regular subscriber to the Ledger we would like to have your name on our list. The Ledger is only $1.00 per year and we have stories awaiting publication that you cannot afford to miss.

* * *

Stay Was Brief.

"Is this Mrs. Smith? I called you up to ask if you could say anything good of Bridget Farley, who lived with you as cook."

"Yes, I can say one thing. She left without breaking any dishes."

"That's encouraging. How long did she stay?"

"One hour."

Not So Built.

One of the officials of our embassy at London tells of an incident that occurred in a train proceeding through the north of Scotland. There was another passenger in the compartment at the time the American entered.

At the next station three Scots came in. They were all big, burly men and completely filled up the seat on the side of the compartment where the first-mentioned passenger was seated. At the next station the carriage door opened to admit a tall cadaverous individual, whose girth was about that of a lamp post.

He tried to wedge himself in between two of the passengers already there, and said to one of them:

"Here, you must move up a bit. Each seat is intended to accommodate five persons, and, according to act of Parliament, you are entitled only to eighteen inches of space."

"Aye, aye, my friend," replied one of the Scots, "that's a' very guid for you that's been built that way; but ye canna blame me if I ha' no' been construckit according to act of Parliament."

* * *

Like a Waffle.

A politician, upon his arrival at one of the small towns in North Dakota, where he was to make a speech the following day, found that the two so-called hotels were crowded to the doors.

Not having telegraphed for accommodations, the politician discovered that he would have to make shift as best he could.

He was compelled for that night to sleep on a wire cot, which had only some blankets and a sheet on it. As the statesman is a fat man, he found his improvised bed anything but comfortable.

"Well," asked a friend, when the politician appeared in the diningroom in the morning, "how did you sleep?"

"Oh, fairly well," replied the statesman, nonchalantly, "but I looked like a waffle when I got up."

* * *

Silenced.

Man may declare that he is the lord of creation, but all the same he fears his wife above everything else should he happen to reach home very late at night Recently a certain husband arrived home much later than usual "from the office." He took off his boots and stole into the bedroom; but, vain precaution, his wife began to stir. Quickly the panic-stricken man went to the cradle of his first-born and began to rock it vigorously.

"What are you doing there, Robert?" queried his wife.

"I've been sitting here for nearly two hours trying to get this baby to sleep," he growled

"Why, Robert, I've got him here in bed with me," said the spouse.

And he never said another word all that night.

* * *

He Awakened.

At a matinee performance a stout woman appeared at the entrance, leading two boys, aged 7 and 9, and presented one ticket.

"You'll have to buy tickets for those boys," insisted the manager.

"No, I won't," she protested; "they always go to sleep as soon as they get inside. Why should I pay for them if they don't see the show?"

The manager thought of the days when his mother took him to matinees, and as the argument was one that he could not get around, he passed them in. After the first act an usher came to the manager and handed him a quarter.

"What's this for?" he asked.

"The fat lady told me to tell you one of the kids woke up."

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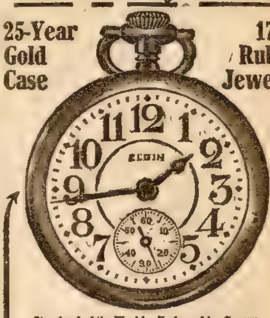

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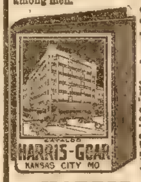

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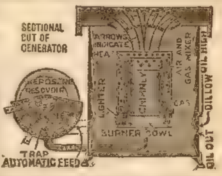

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COPIES WEEKLY.

GENTLE JABS

A stitch in time beats two in the side.

A hot temper requires cool treatment.

Some men are always up and doing—others

The clean tablecloth catches the early grease spot.

And stinginess is the stepmother of dishonesty.

Love of money is the root of much matrimony.

A wrong-minded woman makes a successful gossip.

If a man is seasick it's natural for him to want the earth.

Be a busy bee. It's always better to sting than to get stung.

Don't do any worrying today that you can put off till tomorrow.

Most women have an idea that men couldn't get along without them

We wouldn't mind being awkward enough to fall into a good thing

A man hits a human target nearly every time he shoots off his mouth

It frequently rains on the just because the unjust has swiped his umbrella

We are told that experience is the best teacher—yet some fool men are bigamists.

For every man who wants to borrow trouble there are a hundred willing to lend it.

If you don't owe a dollar you can look any man in the eye and tell him to go to—work.

Nothing seems to surprise some people so much as the failure of the unexpected to happen.

It's easier for a man to make money than it is to spend it to the satisfaction of his wife.

Occasionally a man gets up with the lark so that he can take a swallow before breakfast.

Most people enjoy hearing their enemies roasted more than they do hearing their friends praised.

Not one person in a hundred cares to hear the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

It's hard to love your neighbor as yourself if he keeps chickens while you are trying to raise a garden.

Some people who happen to dream of giving away money think they are charitable and let it go at that.

The trouble with some would-be generous men is that they always leave their money at home in their other clothes

PEPPERS

Could Hold Him.

Just before he left London for a well-deserved holiday at Dunoon, Harry Lauder was telling some good stories in his dressingroom at the Palace.

One of them related to a christening ceremony that was taking place in a church in a mining district. The infant that was to be christened was gloriously arrayed. Among other things it wore a splendid bonnet, which, when the critical moment arrived, the mother had some difficulty in removing.

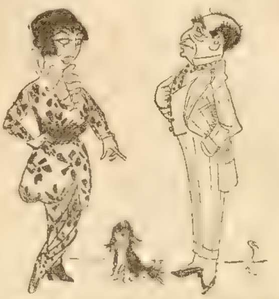
With the eyes of the congregation upon her, the poor woman was greatly flustered, and her attempts to hold the baby and take its bonnet off at the same time seemed likely to end in her dropping the infant on the floor.

The clergyman turned rather impatiently to the father, a tremendously powerful-looking collier, who was standing stolidly watching his wife's struggles.

"Can you hold the child?" he asked sharply.

The big collier turned a disdainful glance on the minister, rather a diminutive man. "Man, I could fling him ower the kirk—an' you, tae!"

■



Mrs. Knottso—"When the Bakers were here did you see Baker try to kick our little Fido?"

Knotto—"Yes—Yes. And I waited an hour to take a return kick at their little Willie."

❧

A Born Diplomat.

"That son Hen o' mine is a born diplomat,' said Uncle Ab Tansy, with a chuckle, when he and Uncle Ti Dodge met at a wayside spring to let their horses drink from the watering trough.

"How's that?" asked Uncle Ti.

'Wal, sir, if you could o' been over to our place yistiday, when Hen was sellin' his little roan two-year-old colt to old Sim Peters, you'd have no need to ask why I say Hen is a born dipplomat. Fust thing he done when old Sim got theer was to ask him to come into the house, an' then he brung up a couple o' quarts o' cider an' a pan o' apples, without savin' a word about havin' a colt to sell. Then he smelled his ma a-fryin' doughnuts, an' he goes out an' brings in a plate of 'em hot from the fat; an' after Si had et five of 'em, he played him five or six tunes on the phonygraph, an' when one o' them big op'ry singers had sung a piece, if Hen didn't up an' say that he didn't think that her voice could compare to Si's daughter Lyddy's voice—an' so it couldn't, for Lyddy's voice is a sort o' a cross between a hyener at bay an' old Susan Beane callin' home her keows. Well, sir, if Hen didn't do all that an' two or three other little things before he so much as said the word 'colt,' an blamed if he didn't sell that critter for twenty-five dollars more'n it was wuth, an' that much more than you or me could of got for it. Next time President Wooderow Wilson is lookin' for a dipplemat, he better send for Hen, for if he ain't a born one I can't say it."
—Judge.

❧

What Was Said.

"I understand that you called on the plaintiff. Is that so?"

"Yes," replied the witness.

"What did he say?"

The attorney for the defense jumped to his feet and objected that the conversation could not be admitted in the evidence. A half hour's argument followed, and the judges retired to their private room to consider the point.

An hour later they filed into the courtroom and announced that the question might be put.

"Well, what did the plaintiff say?"

"He weren't at home, sir," came the answer.

❧

Hearsay Evidence.

A woman journalist who was a witness in a will suit listened intently to the severe and rather bullying cross examination of the witnesses by counsel, who frequently impressed upon his victims that they must say nothing which was merely hearsay and not actually within their own knowledge. When the journalist's turn came, she was cross-examined by the same counsel, whose questions she answered cheerfully until he inquired her age; then she said:

"I do not know."

"What! You do not know your age?" inquired the barrister.

"No, sir, I do not know."

"Do you know when you were born?"

"No, sir," replied the witness. "I have only hearsay evidence as to that!"

■

The Same, But Different.

An artist relates that a newly betrothed lover commissioned him to paint a certain secluded nook in the rocks on the shore, because there he had declared his passion.

The picture was painted, but before it was done the lover said to the arist:

"Of course, I will see you through on that picture, but my engagement is off, and naturally it would be painfully suggestive to me. If you can sell it to somebody else I will take another picture, and be extremely obliged besides."

The painter assented to the arrangement, but within a week his patron presented himself.

"It's all right," he announced. "I'll take that picture."

"Am I to congratulate you on the renewal of your engagement?" the artist asked.

The other seemed a little confused, but quickly recovered his self-possession, and laughed as he said:

"Well, not exactly; it was the same place, but the girl was different."

❧

The Court Agreed.

Lord Justice Vaughan Williams, who admitted the other day that judges were open to criticism, once had a case before him in which the plaintiff was represented by a nervous young barrister.

When the barrister rose to begin his address to the jury he stammered out: "My unfortunate client——" And there he stuck.

He tried again and, in a shaking voice he managed to say: "My unfortunate client——" And could get no farther.

Clearing his throat he had another try and for the third time he quavered out: "My unfortunate client——" And again his voice failed.

"Come, come, Mr. ——," interrupted his lordship, "proceed with your statement. So far the court agrees with you."

❧

Nothing to Use for Thought.

Mrs. Murphy labored in the hot sun over her washtub, while Mr. Murphy sat on the woodpile and gazed into space. His inactivity finally became more than Mrs. Murphy could bear—at least, in silence.

"Why don't you climb down off'n that woodpile and help me with these clothes?" she inquired in no gentle tone.

Mr. Murphy slowly shifted his gaze and directed it upon his laboring spouse. "Why, Mary Ann, can't you see I'm busy?" he drawled.

"Busy?" snapped Mrs. Murphy. "What doin'?"

"Why, I'm thinkin', Mary Ann."

"Thinkin'?" she repeated. "What with, you old fool?"

❧

Not to Be Wondered At.

Little Polly, coming in from her walk one morning, informed her mother that she had seen a lion in the park. No amount of persuasion or reasoning could make her vary her statement one hairbreadth.

That night, when she slipped down on her knees to say her prayers, her mother said, "Polly, ask God to forgive you for that fib."

Polly hid her face for a moment. Then she looked straight into her mother's eyes, her own eyes shining like stars, and said, "I did ask Him, mamma, dearest, and He said, 'Don't mention it, Miss Polly; that big yellow dog has often fooled me.'"

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Mrs. Raleigh's Secret

Or, The World's Standard - By Emma Howard Wight

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CHAPTER VIII.

SIX months later. A beautiful day in June. Hiram Briggs came across the footbridge, carrying a light basket. His shoulders were bowed and his hair was white as snow. He was dressed with care, wearing dark trousers, a white shirt, and a soft black hat. His face wore a sad look as he placed his basket on the bench under the shade tree. Just then Helen Raleigh came out of the house.

"Why, grandfather, how nice you look!" she exclaimed, with a smile, as she came toward him.

"I put on these heah clothes to go to Marthy's grave," Hiram explained. "This is the an'versary of Marthy's death. She's been dead ten years today."

"I remember when she died," said Helen, thoughtfully. "The news of her death came to mother. It was the first time I had ever seen mother cry. I had never seen her unhappy before." She sighed.

"I went to put some flowers on Marthy's grave," said Hiram. "Somebody ha' been thar befo' me. Somebody as knowed that Marthy's fav'rite flower be sweet peas. Thar war a big bunch on the grave."

"I think it must have been mother," declared Helen. "She went out quite early this morning."

"I reckon it war. Marthy, she set a lot of sto' by yo' mammy, honey."

"Yes, she must have loved mother very dearly," said Helen, thoughtfully.

"I am rightdown glad that Marthy don't know nothin' 'bout this heah trouble of yo' ma's, Helen," said Hiram, glancing toward the house and lowering his voice. "It would grieve Marthy mightily. She war so sot on Anna's bein' happy, Martha war." He paused, and then continued, reminiscently. "Marthy war took with paralysis befo' she died. She couldn't speak. It 'peared lak thar war somethin' she wanted to say to me mighty bad. I kinder reckon now it was somethin' 'bout yo' ma. Mabbe she wanted to tell what she'd done, a-keepin' that back 'bout Anna." He shook his head. "All them yeahs that Marthy and me lived together as man and wife, I never knowed her to do nothin' that warn't honest and straightfor'ard jest 'ceptin' that onct. I hope as the good Lord won't hold it ag'in' her."

"Amen!" murmured Helen, with great earnestness. "And you never once suspected, grandfather, that she hadn't told father the whole truth?" she asked.

Hiram shook his head. "No, honey," he replied, "no sich thought as that ever come into my mind. T'war a mighty big s'prise to me when I heard 'bout it. Why, bless yo' heart, honey! the most cur'us thing 'bout it to me be that Marthy done kept a secret from me all them yeahs. I reckoned as I 'most knowed Marthy's very thoughts. Why, I couldn't a-kept a secret from Marthy. She'd been sho' to find it out."

"And it is said that a woman cannot keep a secret," declared Helen, with a smile.

"That, thar's a mistake, honey, a mighty big mistake!" exclaimed Hiram. "I've done found out that when a woman onct sets her mind on keepin' somethin' to herself, she's bound to do it. Don't think as I am a-findin' fault with Marthy. Thar warn't a deceitful bone in her whole body. Marthy war a truthful, God-fearin' woman that wouldn't willfully wronged nobody. It war jest the love in her heart what made her do what she done 'bout yo' ma. When it come to the p'int of tellin' John Raleigh, her heart jest nat'rally failed her. She couldn't do it." He sighed. "Po ma! she jest kept back what she war expected fo' to tell."

"She loved much!" murmured Helen.

"That war it, honey! And she never reckoned on things tu'nin' out this a-way."

There was silence for a moment.

"I am afraid that mother is very unhappy, grandfather," said Helen.

"Now, mabbe she ain't, honey," Hiram tried to console her.

"Oh, grandfather, how can she help being unhappy? She loved father so dearly. She is very brave. She never murmurs. But I know her heart is breaking."

Hiram laid his hand affectionately on Helen's shoulder.

"Now, don't you be a-frettin' yo'self, honey! Yo' ma ain't so bad off so long as she's got you."

"She shall always have me. I shall never leave her as long as she is alone and needs me."

"You're a good girl to stick to yo' ma."

At that moment Evelyn Armitage, in motoring attire, appeared on the footbridge. Helen, surprised, went to meet her.

"How do you do, my dear?" exclaimed Evelyn, kissing her.

The first greetings exchanged, Helen invited Evelyn into the house.

"I would rather sit under that tree," declared Evelyn. "I mustn't stay long; my party's waiting for me."

Helen introduced Hiram to Evelyn and they shook hands.

"Delighted to meet you, Mr. Briggs," said Evelyn

"Them's my sentiments, ma'am," declared Hiram, looking at her admiringly.

"What a sweet place!" exclaimed Evelyn, seating herself upon the bench and looking about her. "How lovely it must be to live here!"

"Now, I wouldn't reckon as a fine city lady like you would care nothin' 'bout country life," said Hiram.

"Indeed you're wrong, Mr. Briggs!" declared Evelyn. "I adore the simple, honest life people lead in the country."

Helen glanced at her, amused.

"Sho' 'nough?" exclaimed Hiram, greatly tickled.

"I really do! Oh, Mr. Briggs, you don't know how tired I grow at times of the artificial, insincere life we people lead in cities. People who live in the country are so different, so much better."

"Well, now, I don't know," said Hiram, thoughtfully. "Human natur' be the same all the world over, 'pears to me." He moved toward the house as he spoke. "I reckon, though, thar be mo' in the cities to bring out the evil what is in human natur'."

"That is true, Mr. Briggs. But it seems to me," with a pensively admiring glance about her, "that one couldn't help being good in a place like this."

"I reckon we be nigher to the good Lord than them that lives in cities," said Hiram, as he passed into the house.

Evelyn turned smiling to Helen. "Were you surprised to see me?" she queried.

"Well, yes, I was a little," Helen admitted.

Evelyn leaned toward her and touched her hand. "I came to talk to you of Paul Hamilton," she said.

Helen stiffened. "I would rather you wouldn't," she said.

"You must listen to me!"

"I really do not care to hear any more of Mr. Hamilton's immoralities."

"I deserve to have you say that to me," Evelyn admitted. "It was a nasty thing for me to do—to tell you about Florine. I can't tell you how sorry I have been that I did."

"Why did you tell me?" asked Helen, rather curiously.

"Have you never guessed?"

"No, indeed, I have so often wondered why you did it."

Evelyn looked at her contemplatively.

"There are few women who wouldn't have seen through it," she declared.

"No doubt I was stupid," Helen admitted, with a smile.

"I wouldn't call it stupidity. You did not grasp the situation because you are finer than a woman who would have seen through it at once. Women are usually so apt at discovering that which is unworthy in another woman, so slow at discovering the good. I told you about Paul Hamilton because I did not want you to marry him. I fancied you would take that affair of Florine more seriously than most girls, and it seems that I was right."

"You believe that I sent him away because of—that?" Helen spoke in a low voice.

"Why yes, of course you did, you silly child! And when I found how dreadfully cut up he was over it, I was awfully sorry for what I had done." She smiled whimsically. "We women are more unselfish when we love than men."

"You love—Paul Hamilton?"

"Why, yes. Didn't you know it?"

Helen shook her head.

"No. I had heard some gossip to that effect, but I did not know that it was true."

"It is true!" Evelyn suppressed a little sigh. "I didn't know how much I loved him until I saw him so desperately unhappy, after you refused him. Then I knew that I loved him better than I loved myself. He asked me to marry him."

"Why didn't you?" queried Helen, coldly.

"I was desperately tempted. I think I would have married him if I had not realized how miserably sorry he would be—when he came to himself."

"When he came to himself?"

"Yes! His wanting to marry me was the same as though he had taken to drink or to gambling or had gone back to Florine."

"Oh!" exclaimed Helen, looking a little shocked. "What a remarkable idea!"

"I knew he was very fond of you. I didn't know how much he cared for you until he asked me to marry him." Helen laughed. "Tell me, dear, is it true that your engagement to Horace Shipley is broken."

"Yes, it is true!"

"I am so glad!" declared Evelyn, with great sincerity. To herself she was thinking, "What glorious news for that poor Paul!" She arose. "And you won't think any more of that affair of Florine?"

"No; I never do think about it."

"You dear girl!" Evelyn kissed her. "Now I must go!"

Hiram emerged from the house at this moment.

"Good-by, Mr. Briggs!" said Evelyn, holding out her hand to him

"Why, you ain't goin'?" exclaimed Hiram, disappointedly. "We'd be rightdown glad to have you stop with us for a spell."

"Perhaps I will come back some day," said Evelyn.

"Sho' 'nough?" eagerly. Evelyn nodded smilingly. "The city am a mighty wear'some place," continued Hiram. "The people seems allers to be a-runnin' and a-rushin' like they never stopped to rest. Marthy and me seen great sights sich as we never dreamed of. But we war mighty glad to git back home ag'in. I've done a pow'ful lot of work in my time. I thought I knowed what bein' tired meant. But I war mo' tired from that thar trip to the city than I war ever befo'. Yes, the city's a wonderful place! It's a great showin' of the smartness of man. But," removing his hat reverently, "the country be God's world!"

"And God's world is better, finer, than the cities built by man," said Evelyn, softly.

Hiram and Helen walked with her to the footbridge.

"That be a mighty fine woman!" declared Hiram, as they returned.

Helen looked thoughtful for a moment. "Yes, I think she is!" she said, at length.

"I hope she'll come some time and stop with us fo' a spell," said Hiram, as he went toward the house. "T'would do her good. She's got a sort of tired look. I reckon she'd git rested like heah in the country."

"Does Paul believe I am still engaged to Horace Shipley?" Helen said to herself, when she was alone. "Perhaps it is best if he does." She sighed. "I shall never leave mother. It is six months since we came here, and father has made no sign. I want him so! I did not know it would be quite so hard to live without father."

As she turned she saw John Raleigh coming across the footbridge. For a moment she stood gazing at him with quickened breath, then she sprang forward.

"Father, oh, father!"

CHAPTER IX.

JOHN RALEIGH clasped her in his arms. She clung to him, half sobbing.

"Helen, are you glad to see me?" he asked tenderly.

"More glad than I can tell you, father," she replied. "It is such untold happiness to see your dear face, to hear your voice."

"You have missed me, my darling?"

"Yes, father, every hour of my life. There has not been a day that I have not thought of you, wanted you. Oh, it makes me so happy to see you again!" She looked up at him, smiling happily. "You have come to take mother and me home?"

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"I have come for you, Helen. You will go with me?"

"Oh, so gladly, if mother comes, too."

"I have come for you—alone."

Helen gently withdrew from his arms. "I cannot go with you father! I cannot leave mother!"

"You are my child as well as hers," said John Raleigh, with bitterness. "Have I not an equal claim upon you?"

Helen shook her head. "No!"

John Raleigh turned from her sadly. "I see! You love your mother more than you love me."

"No, mother would not let me. She always tried to teach me to love you more than herself."

"She seems to have the stronger claim upon you."

"Yes; she is lonely, sad, and unhappy, how can you ask me to leave mother?" She looked at him with passionate reproach.. "You may have ceased to love her, but how can you but pity her?"

'I do pity her," said John Raleigh, in a low voice.

"But you no longer love her?" She paused, looking at him questioningly, wistfully. He remained silent. "It must be so!" She sighed. "If you still loved her you could not be so cruel to her."

"You are merciless in your judgment, Helen, because you do not understand. I cannot make you see from my standpoint."

"You are right, father; I cannot see from your standpoint. You repudiate my mother, thrust her out as though she had done you an unpardonable wrong. It seems to me cruel, unjust."

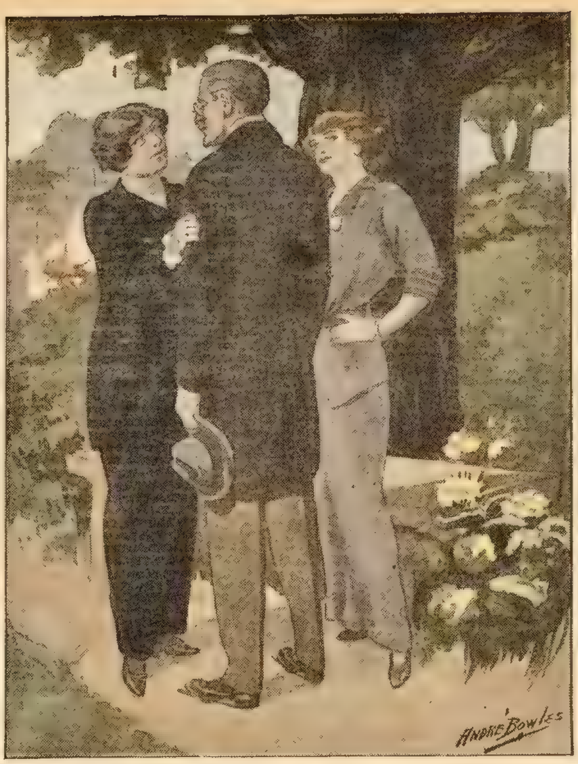
"Are you, my child, to be my judge?" said John Raleigh, very sadly.

"Forgive me, father!" murmured Helen, remorsefully. "I should not have spoken to you like that. But it is so hard when a child must choose between father and mother."

"I know it is dear! That is the most unfortunate part of an estrangement between husband and wife— the children have to suffer."

"We were so happy, father, you, mother, and I. I am sure there was not a happier home in all the world than ours. Mother devoted her entire life to you and to me. She rarely thought of herself. She lived for us. Even had she wronged you, father, she has more than atoned. But she has not wronged you."

"Not willfully, not intentionally, but the wrong exists."



"John!"

"What wrong, father?"

"The wrong to a man if the woman he makes his wife be—unworthy."

"Oh, father, it breaks my heart to hear you speak like—that!" Helen turned away sorrowfully.

"Helen, my child, I cannot bear to hurt you."

"Father, how can you speak in that way of mother? You, of all people in the world, should know how good she is. Why, if you were guilty of a crime, and all the world turned against you, she would love and cling to you still. You know that this is true."

"Yes, I believe it to be true."

"If the case were reversed, if mother had learned something in regard to your past life, would you consider her justified in leaving you?"

"No!"

"Why not?"

"That is very different."

"You mean according to the way the world judges?"

"Yes. Let us not argue the question, Helen. Has my coming here been in vain? You will not return with me?"

"I cannot, father! I cannot leave my mother!"

"Then—good-by!" He held out his hand to her. She threw herself into his arms. He kissed her very tenderly and with great sadness. "My darling, good-by!" He made a movement to release her.

"Father," she pleaded, clinging to him, "don't go away without seeing mother!" He shook his head. "You don't know how it will hurt her, father!"

"It is best, Helen, that we should not meet. It will only be painful to us both."

"Mother is so changed, father. She is pale and sad. She is very unhappy. Father, it was here you first learned to love mother. It was there," pointing to seat, "that you asked her to become your wife. You loved her then, you have loved her for more than twenty years. A love like that does not die so easily. Mother is the same tender, true, devoted, unselfish. She has not changed. Do not judge her according to the cruel and unjust standards of the world. Let your heart plead for her. Father, you will not go away without seeing mother?"

He yielded reluctantly. "Since you so much wish it, Helen, I will see your mother."

"I will tell her," said Helen, going toward the house.

"So I must go back alone," murmured John Raleigh. "I thought that by this time Helen would have wearied of the life here. I counted also on her love for me. What a capacity some women have for self-sacrifice."

He looked about him; his eyes lingered upon the seat under the shade tree. He went up to it, stood looking down upon it.

Anna came out of the house, pale and changed. She stopped abruptly when she saw John. He turned slowly and looked at her. Her face lighted gladly, hopefully. She descended from the porch and went toward him.

"John!"

He went slowly to meet her, regarding her gravely, quietly. Under that look she shrank and her head drooped, the gladness fading from her face.

"Anna!" He lifted his hat.

"I am glad to see you, John," she said quietly.

She hesitated a moment, then held out her hand. They shook hands ceremoniously.

"Helen told me some one wished to see me," Anna said nervously. "She did not say it was—you."

"You were surprised?"

She shook her head.

"No!" after a short pause. "I have been expecting you!"

"You have?" He glanced at her curiously.

"Yes, I knew you would come to see—Helen," she replied very simply.

"Has it also occurred to you that I might try to induce her to go away with me?"

She did not at once reply. "I thought it possible. I was not quite sure," she said, at length.

"That is what brought me," he declared, watching her. "You do not reproach me? You make no protest, no complaint?"

She shook her head.

"No!"

"Most women would."

"I have no right to reproach you! I know how dearly you love Helen." She paused. "I want her to go to you, John."

He looked at her surprised, incredulous.

"You want her to leave you—to come to me?"

"Yes, because it is best for her. And you have a claim upon her as well as I."

"But you would miss her very much," suggested John Raleigh. "You would be very lonely without her."

"That is all tsue, but I must not be selfish," she said, with a smile.

He studied her curiously. Was she sincere? Yes, a face like hers could not lie.

"Helen refuses to leave you," he said. A look of joy and tenderness lighted Anna's face. She half turned from him to hide her emotion. "I am convinced that nothing could induce her to leave you."

"If she will not leave me, then I must leave her," declared Anna, quietly.

"What do you mean?"

"That I shall go quietly out of her life."

He gazed at her wonderingly.

"You would do that?" She inclined her head. "You possess the fortitude, the strength of will?"

"Yes, since it is for my child's good."

He walked away from her and returned.

"Are you thinking alone of Helen, Anna, in making this sacrifice?"

"I would rather you did not ask me—that, John," she replied, in a low voice.

"I do ask it," he persisted, with firmness, "and I want you to answer."

"I am not thinking alone of Helen," she replied, in a low voice. "I want you two to be together and—happy."

"And what of—yourself?"

She smiled. "It does not matter about me. It will be enough for me to know that you and Helen are happy."

He went nearer to her. "I would suggest a simpler adjustment of the matter," he said.

"What is that?"

"Can you not guess?"

She shook her head.

"That you come back to me."

She flushed and a sudden trembling seized her. "John, oh, John, do you really want me?" she faltered.

"Yes." He held out his arms. She went to him and he clasped her to his heart. "Anna, my wife, there hasn't been a day since we parted that I have not wanted you."

He led her toward the seat under the shade tree.

Helen came out of the house and stood looking at them with happy eyes. When a swift month had passed, she stood with, if possible, still brighter eyes beside Paul Hamilton at the marriage altar.

The End.

* * *

Needless Hunger.

An actor without funds managed in some way to get a second-class ticket on a line of steamers running between Seattle and San Francisco.

The voyage between these two points consumed the better part of three days, and in view of the fact that his finances were at a low ebb, he figured it out this way: The first day out he slept all day to keep from eating, and remained up all night to keep from sleeping. The second day took physical-culture exercise.

On the third day he could stand the strain no longer, and he went down to the diningroom and ordered the best meal the boat could afford. While tucking it under his belt, he conjured up in his mind's eye a picture of a cell in the bastile in San Francisco.

After finishing his meal he said to the waiter: "How much do I owe you?"

"Nothing," replied the waiter; "your meals are included in your ticket."

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THE FAIRY CORNER

NAUGHTINESS.

Willie Jones was very naughty
(So was little Johnny Smith),
With a naughtiness so naughty
Nothing could compare therewith.

Willie lived in Kansas City;
Johnny's home was in St Paul;
And their deeds at home were always
Calculated to appall.

All Missouri couldn't show a-
Nother boy so bad as Bill,
Minnesota's chance for dupli-
Cating Johnny Smith was nil.

Tommy Brown lived in Chicago;
Was a boy both wise and witty;
And he started out to save the
Reputation of his city.

Bill and Johnny stay at home now,
Shamed, astounded and dismayed,
For the naughtiness of Tommy
Throws them quite into the shade

INVISIBLE.

One day a girl pulled up a cabbage in a field, and the hole thus made grew bigger, and she saw a little stair that went down, down, down. She set her feet on it, went down, down, down, and came to the loveliest place she had ever seen. Fairies came to meet her and, they welcomed her.

"You shall stay with us, Caterina," they said, and so she stayed for a time, but after a while she told her fairy friends she longed to go back to her mother.

"Stay with us," they said. "You are better here. Besides, we have found you a husband. We have with us a mortal youth, who helps to tend our gardens, and he has fallen in love with you."

"How is that possible?" asked Caterina. "I have never seen him."

"But he has seen you. A wicked enchanter cursed him, so that the first sun that rose while his eyes are open would kill him. An end will come to the enchantment through a woman who shall love and trust him without seeing him. Perhaps you are she That he may have this chance we have made him invisible by day."

Then they led the young man forward. She could not see him, but his voice was beautiful, and he said pleasant things to her, and at last Caterina grew to love him and consented to marry him. He was invisible by day; and no light was allowed in his room at night. Nevertheless, they lived happily, and at last a little child was born to them.

Now Caterina longed to show her baby to her mother and the faries let her go. Her mother asked many questions about the husband. Was he tall? Was he handsome?

"I do not know," said Caterina. "I have never seen him."

"Oh, but that is not right. Perhaps you have married a monster."

"No, no! He is good, and I love him very much"

But her mother gave her a candle and persuaded her to look on his face while he slept. This she did that very night, and she saw a beautiful youth. Alas! Some wax dropped on his hand, and he woke. Sitting up he cried. "Away! away! you false wife! You did not love me truly, did not trust me!"

Caterina flew away in terror, and told the fairies what had happened. "You had better go," they said. So they gave her a ball of thread and told her to go up the little stairs once more, cross the fields, climb a hill, and at the top drop the ball. After that she was to follow the thread.

She took the child in her arms and did as she was told. The thread brought her to a town which was all sorrowful and sad.

"What is the matter," she asked the inhabitants.

"We mourn the loss of our Prince," they said. "So brave and handsome and good he was! And he has vanished"

When Caterina was passing the palace the Queen mother looked out. The child smiled up in the Queen's face, and Caterina was bidden come in.

Now the husband was unhappy after Caterina had gone. He knew in his heart that she had loved and trusted him and that he had been over hasty. So at last he left the fairies and traveled, always by night, to his own town. At least, he could find his mother. Before the sun rose he bound his eyes and hid in caves.

The night he arrived he went into the streets and stopped outside his mother's palace. There he heard Caterina singing her baby to sleep. He knew her voice and he could not help singing, too.

"That's my husband's voice!" said Caterina. "I'd know it anywhere." But when she looked out he was gone. Caterina told the Queen that her husband had sung under the window.

"If he comes again tomorrow," said the Queen, "send for me."

He sang again next night. The Queen came and said "That's my son's voice!"

They both hurried out, but he was gone.

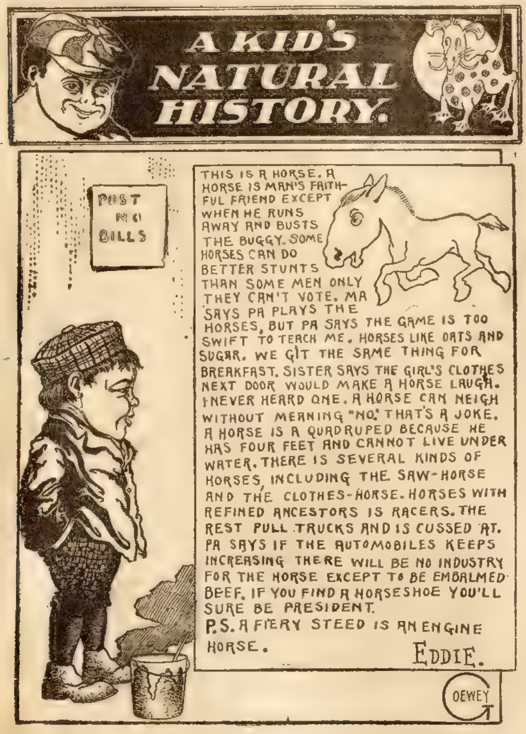
Then Caterina told the Queen that the Prince was under a spell. He might not see the first sun rise and live.

"But he need not see it," said the Queen, "or even know it has risen." She sent out a proclamation that all the cocks in the town were to be banished! And her officers hung great black veils across the streets. You could not see the sky anywhere. About the same hour next night they watched for him, and just as he was beginning his song they ran out and drew him in. And he was so glad to see them both that hours and hours slipped away. Suddenly he cried, "I must be gone! The sun will rise and smite me!"

"The sun rose three hours ago," said his mother. And she ordered the veils to be drawn aside. From that moment he was delivered from the power of the enchanter, and could walk in the light of day with his wife, who had loved him and trusted him before she had ever looked on his face

HELPFUL.

When grandma lost her spectacles she cried, "What shall I do?"
And went to searching all the drawers and shelves,
Till the twins said, "Cheer up, grandma! We will fix you good as new,"
And usefully made spectacles of themselves.



THIS IS A HORSE. A HORSE IS MAN'S FAITHFUL FRIEND EXCEPT WHEN HE RUNS AWAY AND BUSTS THE BUGGY. SOME HORSES CAN DO BETTER STUNTS THAN SOME MEN ONLY THEY CAN'T VOTE. MA SAYS PA PLAYS THE HORSES, BUT PA SAYS THE GAME IS TOO SWIFT TO TEACH ME. HORSES LIKE OATS AND SUGAR. WE GIT THE SAME THING FOR BREAKFAST. SISTER SAYS THE GIRL'S CLOTHES NEXT DOOR WOULD MAKE A HORSE LAUGH. I NEVER HEARD ONE. A HORSE CAN NEIGH WITHOUT MEANING "NO." THAT'S A JOKE. A HORSE IS A QUADRUPED BECAUSE HE HAS FOUR FEET AND CANNOT LIVE UNDER WATER. THERE IS SEVERAL KINDS OF HORSES, INCLUDING THE SAW-HORSE AND THE CLOTHES-HORSE. HORSES WITH REFINED ANCESTORS IS RACERS. THE REST PULL TRUCKS AND IS CUSSED AT. PA SAYS IF THE AUTOMOBILES KEEPS INCREASING THERE WILL BE NO INDUSTRY FOR THE HORSE EXCEPT TO BE EMBALMED BEEF. IF YOU FIND A HORSESHOE YOU'LL SURE BE PRESIDENT.

P.S. A FIERY STEED IS AN ENGINE HORSE.

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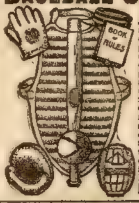

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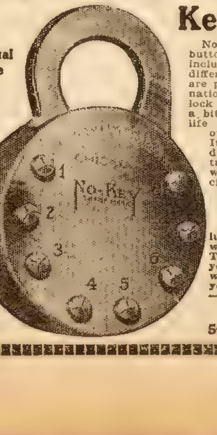

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Bob Bright's Adventures

Or, Hunting the Golden Butterfly

By Weldon J. Cobb

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CHAPTER IV.

ON THE ROAD.

"APPARENTLY something has happened!" exclaimed Sleezer.

"Evidently transpired!" echoed Matz.

"What's the trouble?" demanded Ned Lewis, running forward.

Bob became at once interested. They had not long to wait for developments. The man who had warned Whiffles to keep away from trouble now dived down the dark stairway to pull him out of it. The expectant audience caught the sounds of rustling about and muttered exclamations. The deck hand finally reappeared, dragging Whiffles after him.

Mart was a sight! Whatever the room or cubby he had fallen into, he must have struck a shelf holding paints. What looked like the contents of a can of tar had deluged him from head to foot. He was fairly dripping with the sticky stuff. His hat was plastered with it, the loudness of his nobby suit was toned down with daubs and splashes of shiny, oozing black

Hair, face, and hands had shared in the involuntary bath. All of the passengers stared in breathless amazement. Then most of them went into spasms of laughter at the comical spectacle.

"Remarkable!" observed Sleezer, edging away from any chance contact with the victim of his own rashness.

"Prodigious!" gasped his echo, following him.

Whiffles spluttered, rubbed his eyes, and shook his fist at the deck hand, who, grinning coolly, kept firm hold of him

"I'll have you fired for this!" yelled Mart. "You let me go down there on purpose."

"Don't squirm, sonny," advised the man.

"I want to go to the cabin. Let me out of this."

"You stay just where I put you," ordered the man, whistling to a mate. "You ain't exactly in the trim of them as walks into cabins. Hey, Jack," he hailed to his approaching mate, bring us a swab and some turps. Throw a 'paulin down there first, though, so we won't muss up the deck."

The big-handed sailor bounced Mart about as though he was a manikin. His comrade spread a piece of canvas on the deck, and in the center of this the jack tar placed Whiffles. Then the second seaman brought the swab. This proved to be a great bunch of cotton waste. He also produced a can labeled "turpentine."

Their task was a thankless one. Mart Whiffles was as mad as a hornet at being subjected to this public cleaning. The good-natured fellows, however, kept at him until they had got the worst of the paint off his clothes. The nobby suit presented a speckled and wilted appearance, little resembling its original nattiness, when their work was finished.

"Are we going to land?" asked Bob, as the steamer swung shoreward.

"Very presently. I see some of the fellows ashore there, who will go wild with delight to view Mart Whiffles in his present plight."

An excited, crowding mob of wide-awake boys formed a ring around the newcomers, when they landed, and escorted them to a carryall waiting for all hands at the end of the wharf. Bob felt all his boyish senses merge with the happy, heedless group about him. Mischief and repartee kept the moment lively. Even the fat, jolly-faced driver had some cheery word to speak.

They bundled aboard the carryall, and the driver cracked his whip as a signal for the start. Some one started a college yell. Before very long the big school building came into sight, and Bob was interested and excited over the fast-occurring changes in the progress of the hour.

There were greetings from the boys already arrived on the campus, and the dinner bell rang. Everybody was hungry, and there was a rush for the diningroom, which was a center of hubbub until the meal was over.

Achilles Phinizy happened to run up against Bob in the hall after dinner. He nodded in his abstracted way, and acted as if he was about to take out his magnifying glass to make sure of an identification.

"It's Bright, isn't it?" he observed.

"I hope you haven't forgotten me so soon as this," smiled Bob.

"Not at all, not at all!" Achilles hastened to say. "Since you are a new student, I might help you with the preliminaries."

Achilles took his companion to the office of the school where Bob went through the formalities of enrollment. He introduced him to one of the professors, who put the new student through a brief examination, and directed when and where he should report to classes the next day, and introduced him to his roommate, Dale Winters.

Time passed quickly, and the arrival of the first Saturday at the school gave a jolt of real activity and jollity to every student of the academy. Bob shared fully in the excitement and enthusiasm of the day.

Nearly all of his class had arranged for an outing at Sandy Creek, about three miles west of Rocky Cove. It was an easy stroll, and they reached their shady rendezvous before noon, and two hours later sat down to a famous lunch.

The picnickers were broken up into friendly groups, each of which managed its own donation of edibles. Bob was returning from a spring with a crock full of clear, cold water, when he half halted to observe Mart Whiffles approach his friends in a condition that mystified him and awoke his curiosity. Mart's lieutenant, Dave Baxter, ran forward to greet his chief, halted abruptly, and gasped:

"Why! where's the eggs?"

Bob had halted and had a rear view of Mart, which his crowd did not share. Our hero had to smile. If "eggs" were in question, there was some evidence of such articles—only not in their shells.

Mart Whiffles presented a comical picture. His coat was in tatters, his face was scratched and bruised, as though some one had given him a good sound trouncing. Down his back streaked the ruins of a dozen or more eggs, as if he had been made a target for a wholesale fusillade.

"Eggs!" snorted Mart, almost at the blubbering point. "I got into the barn all right. Some one caught me. Then I got eggs—right on my back. The farmer's two big sons captured and lammed me, their big bulldog finished up the job."

Bob guessed out the situation. Mart was one of those fellows who had little respect for the property of others. He had judged it high fun to make a raid on the nearest hen roost—and he had got his reward. Bob passed on, not, however, until he had caught sight of Mart's fist shaken vengefully in the apparent direction of the farmhouse where he had got his just deserts.

"It will be my turn before night!" hissed Mart to his friend and familiar, Dave Baxter. "Before it's over, you trust me that I'll get even with that old codger and his overgrown boys, good and plenty!"

CHAPTER V.

FIRE!

"HIDE, quick!" said Bob Bright, as they were returning from the day's outing. "Now's our chance. We'll let the crowd slip by, double on them, and reach the academy first."

Breathless, but in high spirits, our young hero and Dale Winters leaped a fence, made a run for a barn, slipped inside its open doorway, and crouched down beside an enormous oat bin. Just as they did so, a boyish figure sprang from the loft stairs and brushed by them so roughly that he quite tipped over the astonished Dale.

"I declare!" gasped the latter, righting himself, while the rushing figure darted through the doorway with the speed of the wind.

"Why," added Bob, in like astonishment, "it was Mart Whiffles!"

"Or his double," asserted Dale. "What in the world do you suppose he was doing here?"

"After more eggs, probably!" said Bob, with a laugh. "Sh'sh! There come our fellows."

With a hue and cry clamor half a dozen of their own party dashed past the barn just then.

"Come on," directed Bob, as the echoing shouts grew fainter. "We'll take a short cut for home while they think they are chasing us ahead."

Dale made a leap and broke into a sharp run the moment he got outside.

"Take care, Bob!" he shouted.

Bob dodged past a brawny old farmer, whip in hand, who had just come upon the scene with the words:

"More of you varmints, eh!"

He made a slash with the whip. Its end neatly swept Bob's cap from his head. It was just getting dark, but there was a fine full moon. Its rays revealed the boy plain as day to the farmer, for as Bob vaulted the fence he shouted wrathfully after him:

"I'll know you when I see you again!"

"We weren't doing any harm," remarked Dale, as his comrade joined him and they ran on together.

"No, but somebody else has been bothering him by trespassing, I should guess," explained Bob, "and I didn't want to feel that whiplash sting for nothing."

"Say, maybe that was the barn where Mart Whiffles got his eggs this afternoon?" suggested Dale.

"Where he didn't get them, you mean," corrected Bob.

"That's so," chuckled Dale. "What was he venturing back there for again, though, after his first lesson?"

"I can't tell you," replied Bob. "Here we are, Dale. We'll ford the creek and save a full mile on our course."

It would be something of a triumph to outdistance their competitors and reach the academy first. They found a safe shallow place in the little brook, got across, and did some sharp sprinting for the next mile. Then they sat down to catch their breath and take a brief rest. They were just starting up again when Dale turned face about with a sharp "Hello!"

"Why," added Bob, also looking back in the direction from which they had come, "it's a fire!"

A lurid spreading glow, perhaps two miles away, showed plainly even from that distance. The boys fancied they could catch the echo of shouts.

"It's a big blaze, whatever is burning," said Bob.

"I'll bet some of the fellows have set fire to that old bog we passed on the road out," suggested Dale. "It was dry as tinder, and it's just in the direction where the glare shows."

"Maybe so," agreed Bob. "We can take it slow now. If the fellows are up to some frolic, we needn't expect them home very early."

They reached the academy within the hour and enjoyed a good meal.

"We've arrived first, all right," observed Dale, as they went out to the campus to join the crowd.

"Ah, Bright, is that you?" hailed a slow precise voice, and Bob turned to greet Achilles Phinizy.

"Going somewhere?" inquired Bob, as he noticed that Achilles carried an unlit lantern and seemed primed for one of his queer night jaunts.

"Why, yes," answered Achilles. "By

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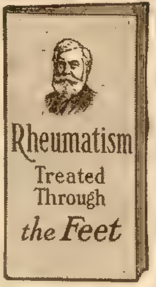

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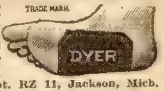

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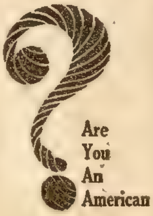

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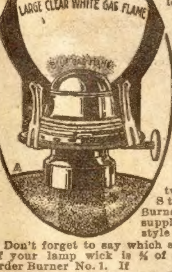
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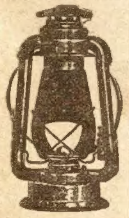

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the way, suppose you come with me."

"Where to?"

"Down the lake beach a ways. Say, I like you, Bright," declared the solemn young scientist, giving his companion a genuine friendly look.

"I'm glad of it," declared our hero. "Besides, it's an honor to have you say so."

"Oh, hardly that!" deprecated Achilles, modestly.

"Yes, it is," insisted Bob. "You're not like the general harum-scarum crowd. Say, Achilles, really, you must know a good deal."

"Why, I study a lot, of course," explained Achilles. "That's natural, for I love anything about animals, or birds, or butter——"

So suddenly did Achilles check himself, that Bob regarded him in wonderment, curiosity, and then suspicion, all at once. Achilles was quite perturbed, almost aghast. In fact, he acted like a person who had made an unguarded break. It was all Greek to Bob what the break comprised, and he marveled.

"Hm—you see," blundered Achilles, trying hard to retrieve his usual restrained manner. "I mean I am in love with science. What I was saying was that you strike me just right."

"You know you once said you would like to have a talk with me about things you are interested in," replied Bob.

"Well, I'd like to have you. That letter you rescued for me aboard of the steamer—do you remember?"

"Quite well."

"It meant a heap to me. I feel that it has sort of obligated me, for it was dreadfully important."

"How, Achilles?"

"I'm going to tell you some time soon. I wonder now, Bright, if you would care to study my ways and ideas?"

"I would, for a fact," responded Bob, enthusiastically. "Your ways are certainly pleasant ways, and I know that your ideas must be good."

"Well, I need a partner. Outside of finding a chum who would enjoy what little I know about science, I have one or two real business propositions where I would give the right fellow a handsome interest."

"You don't say so? I remember, though, you hinted at a fortune, some famous secret you had."

"That's it," nodded Achilles, gravely. "Now, then, how would you like to help me in my plans? They won't interfere with school duties."

"I'd like it first rate," said Bob.

"Then come along with me, and when we come back to the academy I'll tell you all about it."

Bob was very much interested. While Achilles was a quaint curiosity to him in a way, at the same time Bob was impressed with the idea that he knew what he was about and possessed real merit and wisdom.

"I'm going down to the boat club quarters," explained his companion, as they walked along together. "Professor Blake owns the gasoline launch—the Arrow, you know."

"I heard so, but I've never seen the craft," said Bob.

"Well, it's a little beauty. Soon as the club starts in practice you must join one of the crews. They have lots of fun. The Professor is a good friend of mine, and he has kindly offered me the use of the Arrow next Saturday. There is a trip up shore I want to make very much. It's in the line of the business I told you about. I want to look the Arrow over to see that everything is shipshape. There's where I'm headed for now."

The ground rose to a series of bluffs as the boys progressed. They had reached a high point, as they came to where some steps led down over two hundred feet to a couple of platforms extending out into the lake. A good-sized launch lay moored between it and the houses containing the racing boats of the club.

"Why, say!" suddenly observed Achilles, for the first time noticing a bright glow in the distance, "there's quite a blaze somewhere over yonder."

"Yes," assented Bob, "Winters and I noticed it coming back from the picnic. He thought it was a dry marsh the fellows had set fire to."

"I hardly think that," dissented Achilles, gazing steadily from their elevated point of inspection. "It's surely some kind of a building. I fancy I can make out the outlines of blazing timbers."

"Why, I believe that is true," acquiesced Bob, staring hard.

However, he was not sure, and he was most interested in getting to the boat houses below. He little dreamed at the moment how vitally the fire in the distance was connected with his near future career.

In a few minutes they were aboard the launch. It was a superb watercraft of its class, and quite large. It had a pit at the stern, wheelhouse at the bow, and a roomy cabin occupied the center of the craft.

"I've got the key," announced Achilles. "We'll look over the cabin. You light the lantern, Bright, while I unlock the door."

Bob had just finished getting the lantern lit, and Achilles had opened the cabin door, when both started with a shock. From somewhere aboard the launch there had echoed out a sudden, alarming cry as of some person in sore distress.

CHAPTER VI.

"THE BAREFOOTED BOY."

"WHAT was that?" inquired Achilles, shutting the door with a suspicious jerk just as he had opened it.

"I don't know," replied Bob, equally uncertain and stirred up.

"It sounded like someone in pain or trouble," went on Achilles, thoughtfully. "It was certainly a human voice."

"Perhaps it's some tramp," suggested Bob. "The lantern's lit, Achilles. Open the door and let us investigate."

The young scientist stood aside while his companion led the way into the cabin. Bob held up the lantern so that its rays shed light all over the place. The cabin was quite large and well furnished. Nothing seemed out of order, and nothing indicated that it had been invaded or occupied by a trespasser. However, as Bob turned into a second compartment used as a kitchen and diningroom he uttered an intelligent "Hello!"

"What is it?" questioned Achilles, peering curiously over his shoulder.

Bob pointed to a table. It bore the remnants of a recent meal. The room had three bunks, which folded into the sides of the apartment to economize space. One of these was open and looked as if it was being used to sleep in.

"Some one has been here, but there's no one here now," decided Bob.

"There's another space beyond that end of the room," explained Achilles, pointing to a narrow door.

"What does that lead to?"

"A sort of cubby baggage-room, and that," replied Achilles.

Bob pulled open the door in question. It was to be faced by an iron grating the entire length of the aperture.

"What's that grating for?" he asked.

"To keep any one from getting in there," answered Achilles. That's where they keep the goodies when Professor Blake invites a lot of the fellows on a run down shore. Gasoline supplies and all kinds of truck in there, too. Hello, here's a padlock and chain to the door. That wasn't there when I was here the last time. Queer! It was locked with a key then."

"We can't open it," reported Bob, giving the grated door a sharp jerk. "Let's see if we can throw some light on the subject."

"There it is again!" suddenly exclaimed Achilles, with a nervous start.

That same cry reechoed at just that moment. Bob was sure that it came from the room beyond the grating. The sound was something of a drone. It was muffled and irregular, more like the utterance of some person disturbed in his sleep than anything else.

Bob held the lantern just as close to the grating as he could. The space beyond, however, was very dark, and he could not focus the rays of light so as to get any sweeping view of the littered-up apartment.

"Here, hold the lantern for a minute, Achilles," he directed, and while his companion did this Bob swung back its top and removed the lamp inside. The light flickered in the air as it was moved about, but extending it in his hand through the bars he held it steadily.

Achilles peered close at his back, breathlessly staring into the cubby and aroused more than ordinarily from his wonted calmness. There was something to stare at, indeed! Over in the remotest corner of the cubby were several bunk mattresses, piled one upon the other. Across the top one of the heap [illegible] human figure.

"Locked in, all alone, and—[illegible] like a boy."

"It does, yes," assented Achilles. [illegible] call to him. He's asleep, but wake hi[illegible] up."

The face of the seeming slumberer was turned from the intruders. Bob shook the grating and called out loudly:

"Hey, there! wake up, will you?"

There was no indication that the sleeper heard the commotion. Bob took his knife from his pocket and rattled it vigorously against the bars. He succeeded in making a hideous clatter. The sleeper stirred. Then, as if in a nightmare, he uttered that same incoherent cry the intruders had heard twice before.

"Wonder what makes him sleep so soundly?" observed Achilles. "Now he's turning over. Say, you, rouse up! What's the trouble here?"

The sleeper turned clear over on his uneasy couch. As his face and form swung into view, and he was clearly outlined in the focused rays of the lamp, Bob Bright was so amazed that he almost jostled Achilles over and dropped the lamp.

"Why, what's the matter?" demanded his companion, in blank amazement and consternation.

Bob did not at once reply. He stooped over and busied himself in picking up the lamp before it spilled its contents and set fire to things. Only, under his breath he fairly gasped out:

"The barefooted boy!"

Those three words expressed volumes. They would have been fairly enlightening to Ned Lewis, but Bob never told Achilles of the mysterious lad who had

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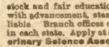

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been chased into the water slip at Cliffden.

"I know the boy," he explained, as he righted the lamp.

"You do? What's his name, Bright?"

"I don't know that," replied Bob, "but I have a mighty big interest in the fellow. How he ever came here I can't for the life of me understand, but it means something interesting, I tell you! We've got to get him roused up, some way."

Bob was very much excited. A score of strange and disturbing theories ran riot through that active mind of his. He was more certain than ever now that the barefooted boy was in some mysterious way concerned in his affairs. It meant a good deal, Bob told himself, that the boy should follow him, or seem to follow him, clear from Cliffden way up here to Rocky Cove.

"He acts as if he was drugged," observed Achilles. "I do believe there's a queer sort of an odor in the air. Say, here's a pole. Poke him, and see if he won't wake up and tell what he's doing here."

"It looks to me as if he hardly knows himself. He couldn't have locked himself in there. Oh, I've got to get to him, some way! I'll tell you why later."

Achilles had discovered a pole for opening the cabin skylight, and had handed it to Bob. The latter reached it in through the bars of the door. He gently prodded the slumberer, but the action produced no effect upon him.

"I guess you're right," said Bob. "He must be sick or drugged, or something like that. I'm going to find out for sure, though. I wonder if we can't find a crowbar or something to pry open that door."

"There are some heavy tools back in the engine pit," replied Achilles. "Come on, we'll get them."

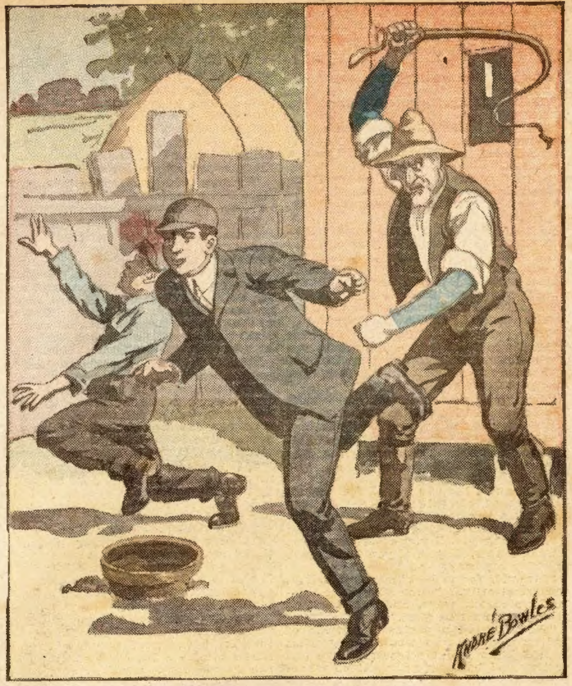
"Not just yet!" spoke a sharp, rasping voice, and both boys turned quickly around in startled wonder.

CHAPTER VII.

A DOUBLE CAPTURE.

IN ONE flashing moment of time Bob formulated a theory. He recognized the newcomer as the man who had given chase at Cliffden. This man had something to do with the barefooted boy. Here was the latter a prisoner. Why had he sought to capture him and lock him up?

"That barefooted boy was looking for me at Cliffden," decided Bob quickly. "What more natural, missing me, than that he should follow me to Rocky Cove? This man got on his trail, followed him, and got him in his clutches. What's the mystery, anyway? In some way, it's clear, the boy has some business with me, and this man wants to mix up in it, or prevent it, or muddle it."



"More of you varmints, eh?"

Achilles kept solemnly regarding the intruder. When he had seen him at Cliffden chasing the barefooted boy, Bob had considered him about as wicked a looking fellow as he had met in many a day. Now, his face distorted with rage and insolence, unkempt and vicious-looking, he positively made Bob shudder.

"Did you say anything?" spoke Bob, bluntly.

"Did I say something?" growled the man, showing his ugly teeth. "Yes, I did. To say something further, what are you doing here?"

The speaker kicked the cabin door shut behind him. He looked Bob over with a queer, crafty expression in his eye.

"What are you?" broke in Achilles, gravely. "This launch belongs to Professor Blake. He is my friend, and I represent him. It appears that you are using this property without permission. Why, may I ask?"

"What's your name now?" inquired the man, paying no attention to the direct challenge given.

"Achilles Phinizy."

"And this boy?"

"I am Bob Bright," announced our hero, promptly. "Does it interest you?" he added meaningly.

"Yes, it does," replied the man. "Before I explain, though, I want to know why you're so anxious to get at that boy in yonder."

"I'll tell you that," said Bob. "I believe he is a friend of mine."

"Don't you know it?" propounded the man.

"I don't. I know he has been looking for me. I know he looks in trouble and distress. I want to find out what it all means—and I'm going to."

"Hoity-toity! Is that so, now?" sneered the man.

"Yes, it is," retorted Bob, doughtily. "As my friend says, this is our boat and not yours. The academy is near at hand, and we can soon get help. If you don't instantly release that boy, we will go straight to the academy and bring those who will make you."

The man scowled darkly. Then he seemed to change his mind, as he was apparently about to jump at Bob, or strike him for his boldness. A sinister look came into his face, as he said in a subdued tone:

"Oh, I don't want to have any trouble. That boy in there isn't right, and I am taking care of him."

"How do you mean he isn't right?" demanded Bob.

The man touched his head in a significant way, as if to indicate that the wits of the prisoner were distraught.

"I'd like to try and rouse him up, all the same," said Bob.

"Surely—of course," readily responded the man, so very readily, in fact, that if Bob had not been so interested in the captive, he would have become suspicious at the apt alacrity of the fellow to give him his own way.

The man drew a key from his pocket and stepped up to the grated door. He inserted a key in its padlock and swung the door open.

"Go ahead," he directed, not ungráciously. "You're bound to have your own way, so see what you can do with him."

Bob instantly entered the room beyond. Achilles felt himself pushed after him. In an instant the iron door was banged shut, with deft rapidity the man relocked it. He chuckled with half malice, half triumph.

"Hold on!" began Achilles.

"See here!" shouted Bob.

The man waved his hand in a mocking, tantalizing manner. Without another word, he disappeared into the cabin, closing the connecting doors as he did so.

"Well!" exclaimed Achilles breathlessly, adjusting his glasses and staring blankly through the bars.

"Yes, we're in for it," said Bob. "Of all the bold villains, though!"

"What do you suppose?" queried Achilles.

"I don't suppose—I see it all!" answered Bob, smarting with chagrin at being led into a trap so easily. "The fellow was smarter than we were. He was working all along to ensnare us. Pshaw!"

There was a glum silence. Both of them were thinking deeply. They were certainly in a bad fix, without understanding the real motive that had made them prisoners.

They could hear the man on deck now moving about heavily and rapidly. Then there came a sound that made the face of Achilles blanch and that of Bob grow strangely serious.

Cling! clang!

"The mischief!" ejaculated Bob. "The man isn't fooling or trying to scare us."

"What do you mean?"

"Why," replied Bob, in a mystified and really anxious tone, "he's set on carrying us away."

At that moment the exhaust of the engine gave out some new rapid chuggings. The Arrow had started away from land.

This thrilling story will be continued in the next issue of the Ledger. During the coming months many great stories will appear in these columns. If you are not already a subscriber for this paper, it will repay you to send in a year's subscription. It costs you only $1.00, and you will never regret it. Let us hear from you at once.

* * *

Honest Child.

"Since you worked your examples so nicely," said the pretty teacher, "I shall give you a kiss."

"Teacher, I didn't know there was to be a reward," responded the honest urchin. "It's only fair to tell you that my big brother did them sums."

* * *

Came Near It.

"Did you ever play polo?"

"No, but I fell off the top of a clothes horse once with a hammer in my hand, trying to fix a gas fixture."

Frontivard, The Terrible

(Continued from page four.)

ter. It was addressed to the Minister of Police, St. Petersburg, Russia, and informed that official that if his agents would go to No. 60, Street St. Michael, Moscow, on the night of the 21st of July, they would find there a band of conspirators who plotted the assassination of the Czar.

"I hope the mine works," said Frontivard, as he threw the letter in at the mailing window.

"And if it doesn't the Invisible Tribunal is very likely to lose two of its best agents," said Reverdy.

"Well, death comes at last to all," rejoined his companion placidly.

In next week's Ledger the second story in this remarkable series will appear. There will be eight stories, each one complete in itself, yet all dealing with Frontivard and his companion detective, Reverdy, in their struggles to suppress the Brothers of the Red. Readers will find these stories among the most thrilling and strange that the Ledger has ever published. Don't miss them.

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"'Now, witness,' said the cross-examining lawyer, 'when you declare White to be well off, what do you mean? Is he worth ten thousand dollars?'

"'No, sah. Oh, no, sah,' said Calhoun.

"'Is he worth five thousand?'

"'No, sah. My gracious, no.'

"'Is he worth one thousand?'

"'No, sah, he ain't wuf a quarter of a dollar.'

"'Then how is he well off?'

"'Bekase, sah, his wife am an A No. 1 washlady, and keeps de hull family in bang-up style.'"

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No more lost-key troubles. No buttons to fumble. Just turn knob as directed. 40,000 combinations possible. No one can open yours but you. Operated as easily in dark as in light.
AGENTS MAKING 100 PER CENT PROFIT. Sells on sight in city or country. Write today for terms of free samples. A postal card will do.
Address, Victor Specialty Co., 50 Cook St., Canton, Ohio

AGENTS My Sanitary Coffee Maker produces pure, sweet coffee, needs no settler and never wears out. Saves coffee, money and health. Every wife buys at sight; new invention; exclusive territory. Send 15c. for 50c. size postpaid.
DR. LYONS, 429 Day St., Pekin, Ill.

THE SPEEDY STITCHER
Sews Leather Like a Machine
Price $1.00
Send for terms to Agents.
AUTOMATIC AWL CO., 48 Hermon St., Worcester, Mass.

BIG MAIL FREE!
POST OFFICE
Would you like to get a lot of letters, circulars and packages? You probably know that manufacturers, supply houses, wholesalers and publishers buy names and addresses for the purpose of sending samples, advertising matter, papers and circulars to. Good names and addresses are hard to get and are quite expensive. We publish an AGENT'S DIRECTORY LIST containing names and addresses carefully arranged in alphabetical order. We send these Directory Lists to concerns we know are anxious for good names to send advertising matter to. Write your name very plainly so the printer will not make a mistake; be sure to give your street number and town also plainly written so that any mail addressed to you will reach you without fail. We have been publishing the Agent's Directory List for several years and refer you to the editor of this paper who will tell you we are reliable. All we ask is that you send 10 cents in silver and we will enter your name in our Agents' Directory List as above stated. Write today. Address
Agent's Directory List, Indiana, Pa.

The LEDGER'S EMBROIDERY CORNER.

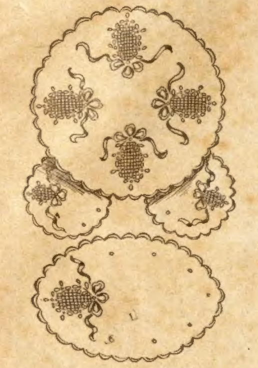
We call the attention of every woman to the beauty of the patterns displayed from week to week, and wish to impress upon each one the splendid quality of material that makes our offer a great bargain in every case. Every offer is complete. You can finish it up without buying anything extra.

These designs are already stamped on best quality cloth, and every set comes to you complete, exactly as described.

Every one of the designs we are going to offer is new and up-to-date, and nowhere else can you secure the same, as they are made exclusively for us.

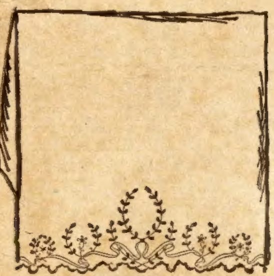
You are sure to find many articles that you want if you watch the Ledger each week, and it is so easy to get them, every woman should have little trouble in getting almost every one.

Canada, subscriptions 50 cents more than price quoted below.



No. 104, Lunch Set.

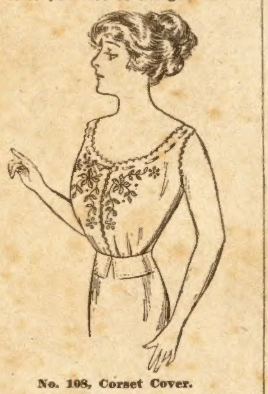
NO. 104, LUNCH SET.—This set is very useful for the home. It consists of one centerpiece, 18x18 inches; one tray, 15x18 inches, and two doilies, each 9x9 inches. All of these are stamped on the best quality Irish linen. The design is for punch work and outline embroidery. You can get this set free by sending $1.00 for a year's subscription to the Blade or Ledger. This set is complete with floss for working.



No. 107, Fancy Towel.

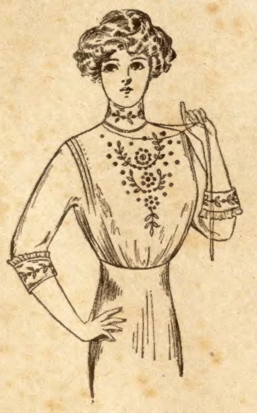
NO. 107, FANCY TOWEL.—This towel and design is for solid embroidery and edges to be buttonholed. The pattern is stamped on cotton huck 20x36 inches. The quality of the material is excellent, and the offer includes floss for working. It will be sent you absolutely free of charge when you send $1.00 for a year's subscription to the Blade or the Ledger.

NO. 108, CORSET COVER.—This corset cover is for solid embroidery and edges to be buttonholed. The pattern is stamped on fine quality nainsook, and embroidery floss is included. We will send it to you free of charge when we receive $1.00 and your order for a year's subscription to the Blade or the Ledger.

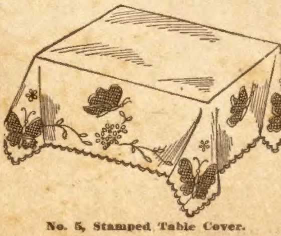


No. 108, Corset Cover.

NO. 109, MISSES' WAIST.—The beautiful design in this offer is for solid and eyelet embroidery. It is stamped on fine quality lawn and we include embroidery floss for working. This will be sent to you free of all charges if you send us $2.00 for a year's subscription to the Blade and the Ledger.



No. 109, Misses' Waist.



No. 5, Stamped Table Cover.

NO. 5, STAMPED TABLE COVER FOR PUNCH WORK.—This table cover is stamped on linon, size 36x36 inches, and includes: 2 packages of assorted needles; 1 punch work needle; 1 stiletto; 15 skeins of C. B. embroidery cotton; 1 book of embroidery stitches by "Mme. DuParque."

This dainty design, complete as described above, sent free to any one who will send us $2.00 for a year's subscription (new or renewal) to both the Blade and the Ledger.

* * *

How She Recognized Her.

Mary met Emily on the street. They had not seen each other for many years.

"Why, how do you do!" exclaimed Mary, effusively, topping off the salutation with a few vague pecks at Emily's face.

"Now, this is delightful," said Emily, who was older than Mary. "You haven't seen me for eleven years and yet you know me at once. I couldn't have changed so dreadfully in all that time. It flatters me."

Said Mary:

"I recognized your bonnet."

RESINOL WILL STOP THAT ITCH

Brings Instant Relief and Quickly Clears Away Skin Eruptions.

No matter how long you have been tortured and disfigured by itching, burning, raw or scaly skin humors, just put a little of that soothing, antiseptic Resinol Ointment on the sores and the suffering stops right there! Healing begins that very minute, and your skin gets well so quickly you feel ashamed of the money you threw away on useless, tedious treatments.

Wherever drugs are sold, you can be just as sure of finding Resinol Ointment as court-plaster or a toothbrush. This is because doctors have prescribed it so regularly for the last eighteen years that every druggist knows he must keep it constantly in stock. When you ask for Resinol Ointment be sure you get the genuine, and not something that merely looks or smells like it. Resinol Ointment (50c. and $1.00), is most effective for healing sores, boils, wounds and piles. For free trial of Resinol Ointment and a miniature cake of Resinol Soap, write to Dept. F, Resinol, Baltimore, Md.

YOUR NEXT SUIT FREE

Made to Your Measure

$30 to $40 would not buy a better one, but you get it for nothing. Not a cent to pay. Simply wear it, tell your friends where you got it, and make

$10 to $15 a Day

taking their orders. It is dead easy. You never saw a nobbier suit or a more stunning pattern, cut in strictly Tango style (3 months ahead of the times). Your choice of 60 patterns and a dozen different styles to choose from. Drop us a postal card for heavy pattern book, inside information about styles, self-measuring, blanks, etc., etc. Don't wait. Everything free—We pay expressage. Get ahead of the other fellows—write this very minute. A postal will do it.

Hand Tailored
Classy Linings
MillionaireTrimmings
Swell Cut
Guaranteed Fit

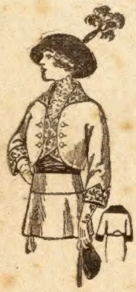
AMERICAN WOOLEN MILLS CO.
Dept. 306, Chicago

PATTERN COUPONS FREE!

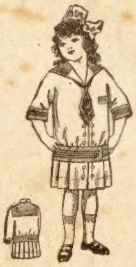
Hundreds of Patterns to Select From

The great difficulty in making one's own garments is to get suitable patterns. Our women readers could make many pretty and useful things for themselves and their children if they could get well-made patterns. We have arranged to give our readers a pattern service unexcelled.

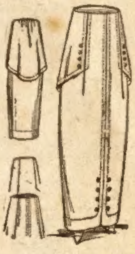
We make a splendid offer of the best and most fashionable patterns that can be produced by the greatest designers of New York and Paris, and what is more, these patterns will be within the reach of every one, and every one will have a wide selection to choose from. **Read our splendid offer below.**



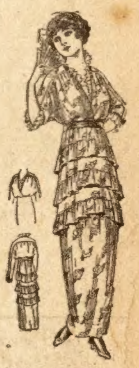
8197 Eton Coat, 34 to 42 bust.



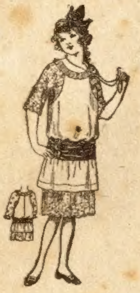
8198 Girl's Long Waisted Dress, 4 to 8 years.



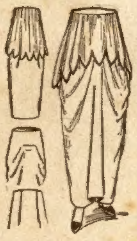
8194 One-Piece Skirt, 22 to 30 waist.



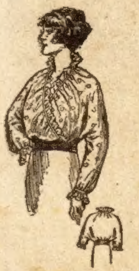
8200 Semi-Princesse Gown, 34 to 40 bust.



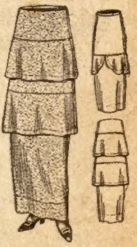
8188 Girl's Low Be ted Dress, 10 to 14 years.



8191 Draped Skirt for Misses and Small Women, 16 and 18 years.



8192 Fancy Blouse, 34 to 40 bust.



8196 Two-Piece Skirt, 22 to 30 waist.

HOW TO GET THE FREE PATTERNS

Here is the way we will do it. To every one who will send us one dollar for a year's subscription to The Chicago Ledger we will send absolutely free five pattern coupons. Each coupon will be good for one pattern and you can select the patterns from those illustrated in any issue of The Chicago Ledger. When you see a pattern that you like all you have to do is to send us a coupon and it will be sent to you at once. In this way you will have hundreds of patterns from which to pick the five that you will be entitled to, and you have all the time you need to pick out the ones you want.

These patterns are the best that can be made. Each pattern gives full directions for the cutting and making with information as to the amount of cloth required, etc, so that any one can make any of the designs illustrated with no trouble at all. At the same time, they are so stylish and accurately cut that dressmakers and seamstresses all over the country will be quick to take advantage of this liberal offer. Some will subscribe for two years so they can get ten coupons. These designs are made by the best designers and modists of New York and Paris, and are up-to-the-minute in fashion and beauty.

We treat old and new customers alike on this splendid offer. If you are already a subscriber, send in a dollar and we will send you the five pattern coupons and extend your subscription one year from the time it now expires.

To get these five coupons entitling you to five patterns, fill out the blank below and enclose it with one dollar for a year's subscription to The Chicago Ledger. Do this now—today! No woman should be without the Ledger's Pattern Coupon Book. Be among the thousands of women who will get these coupons.

.... CUT THIS OUT AND SEND TO US ....

THE CHICAGO LEDGER, 500 N. Dearborn Street, Chicago, Ill.

Enclosed please find one dollar for a year's subscription to The Chicago Ledger. This entitles me to Five Pattern Coupons. **Canada Subscription Price $1.50 per year.**

NAME ....

Street No.
or R. F. D. ....

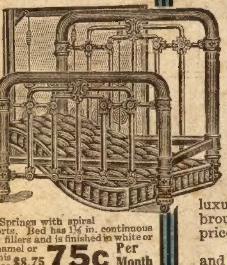
Box.............Town...

This is a..........................Subscription. State.........................
(New or Renewal)

If you wish any pattern from those advertised in this issue, mark the number and size on the margin and we will retain a coupon for each pattern we send you when we send you the Coupon Book. (Order by size and number.) **Coupons good for six months.**

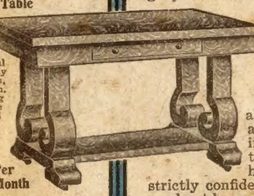
Hartman Will Trust You
Requires No References
Asks No Advance Payment

No. 3F714—Big Bed Outfit Bargain



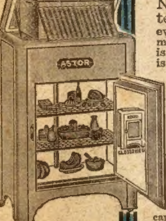
Just to giv you an example of what immense bargains our big catalog contains, we ask you to order this Complete Bed Outfit, consisting of massive iron bed in 4 ft. 6 in. width, elastic top, fibre filled mattress with durable ticking, all Angle Iron Springs with spiral spring supports. Bed has 1⅛ in. continuous posts, heavy fillers and is finished in white or pea green enamel or ingold (Vernis Martin). Price $8.75 **75c** Per Month

No. 5F617—Stunning Colonial Library Table

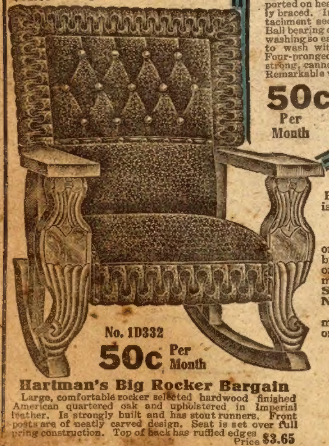


This beautiful library table of selected hardwood, finished, American quartered oak. Thoroughly substantial construction. Expertly finished. High gloss, hand rubbed polish. Large 28x42 top. Big roomy drawer. Base has artistically shaped feet. Striking Colonial pattern. Is right in style. Value cannot be duplicated under $13 to $15. Our price only $8.35 **75c** Per Month

No. 7D286 Refrigerator Bargain



Our New Astor—a Model Sanitary Refrigerator, the very latest construction. Outside hardwood case is made of selected ash, finished with rich gray enamel—rounded corners. Polished inside provision chamber is pure white enamel, has removable wire shelves and drain pipe all white enamel, galvanized iron ice chamber and rack also removable. Sold with our protective legal guarantee. Size 43 in. high; 24 in. wide; 16 in. deep. Ice capacity 65 lbs. It is necessary to see this wonderful refrigerator bargain in order to fully appreciate it. Order on 30 days' FREE examination. Price $12.75 **$1.00** Per Month



No. 1D332

50c Per Month

Hartman's Big Rocker Bargain

Large, comfortable rocker selected hardwood finished American quartered oak and upholstered in Imperial leather. Is strongly built and has stout runners. Front posts are of neatly carved design. Seat is set over full spring construction. Top of back has ruffled edges Price $3.65

Remarkable Bargain Sale

Now is the time to furnish—to get the rug, rocker, refrigerator or any of those other home-furnishings you've been needing so long. Never has this great House of **Hartman**, or any one else, been able to equal these truly remarkable values. The importance to home-lovers, everywhere, of this great Price-Smashing Sale of Guaranteed Dependable Quality Home Furnishings, cannot be over estimated.

No Need of Meagerly Furnished Homes

Not only the necessities of home-furnishing, but the comforts and even the luxuries, found heretofore only in the homes of the rich and prosperous, have been brought within the reach of even those of very limited means by the remarkably low prices and most liberal Easy Payment Plan offered by the famous House of **Hartman.**

You should send today for the Big, Special, FREE Hartman Credit Bargain Book and find out for yourself. It shows everything in home-furnishings, including a marvelous assortment of carpets, rugs and draperies in color, patterns and designs photographed from originals. It will be like bringing into your home an enormous stock of home-furnishings, many times the size of largest city stores, including

Furniture
Carpets
Rugs
Clocks
Jewelry
Stoves, Ranges
Refrigerators
Silverware
Go-Carts
Phonographs
Sewing Machines
Washing Machines
Mattresses
Tinware
Carpet Sweepers, Etc.
Portieres
Lace Curtains
Springs
Dishes
Bedding, Etc.

Your Credit Good at Hartman's

To the millions of honest home-lovers, everywhere, who are particular about their homes—who want them furnished beautifully, with serviceable furnishings, but who find it more convenient or necessary to pay in small easy payments, **Hartman** says: "I will trust you—just as I am trusting over a million of other home-lovers who are now buying their household needs from **Hartman.**" **Hartman's** transactions with you are strictly confidential, no references are asked—no embarrassment. Your neighbors need not know your business—you'll like the **Hartman** plan when you know all about it.

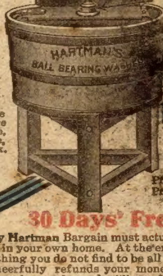
Hartman Makes Easiest Terms

No matter who you are or where you live, your credit is good at **Hartman's.** No matter how small your income **Hartman** meets your requirements. We trust home-lovers everywhere on an open charge account without any red tape whatever. There are no extra charges, no mortgage to sign, no interest to pay—nor do we ask for any security. The **Hartman** modern credit system is free from ALL objectionable features. With long-time credit as easy to get as it is from **Hartman** there is no reason for anyone, even of limited income, to live in a meagerly furnished home.

Hartman Asks No Advance Payment

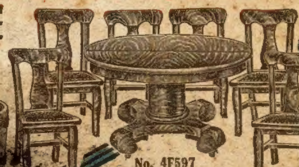
During this big sale you can order any of these special advertised bargains without sending us any advance payment.

No. 7F460 Hartman's Ball Bearing Washer



Tub of eight shirt capacity, bottom and sides sides corrugated, made of selected cypress, known to withstand effects of lye, soap and acids. Heavily varnished. Lid has detachable hinges, easily removed. Tub supported on heavy legs, strongly braced. Improvement attachment securely fastened. Ball bearing connections make washing so easy it is a pleasure to wash with this machine. Four-pronged dasher, large, strong, cannot split or crack. Remarkable value at $5.75

50c Per Month



No. 4F597
Bargain Dining Room Set

It consists of seven pieces. The table is made of solid oak and richly finished golden, has 45 inch top, which extends to 6 feet when open, fitted with smooth running extension slide. Has massive pedestal and base supported by Colonial scroll legs. Chairs are made of solid oak with rich quartered oak back panel and banister, finished golden. Have box seats covered with Imperial leather, strong stretchers and shaped front legs.

Price complete set, $21.85 **$1.00** Per Month
Price of table, $11.75; 75c Month.
Price of 6 chairs, $10.10; 75c Month.

30 Days' Free Examination

Every **Hartman** Bargain must actually sell itself on its own merit, after you see it in your own home. At the end of a month you are privileged to return anything you do not find to be all we claim and perfectly satisfactory. **Hartman** cheerfully refunds your money—including freight. Because **Hartman** has made good millions of times under such a test, **Hartman's** is the Greatest Home Furnishing Plant in the World.

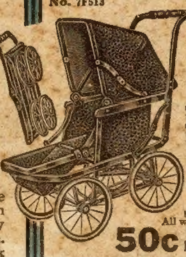
Hartman's Guarantee Protects You

We have reproduced it word for word on this page. Read it. When you order from **Hartman** you are protected legally by our binding guarantee backed by our 59 years' reputation for square and liberal dealings, our entire resources of over $10,000,000.00 and our enormous organization of 22 retail stores and immense mail order house and endorsement of eight of America's reliable banks.

Send Address On Postal NOW For Hartman's Big FREE Bargain Catalog

You must see this Mammoth **Hartman** Credit Special Bargain Book—you must compare the remarkable offerings—nothing else like it—we are holding one for every reader of this paper, so send name and address on postal to

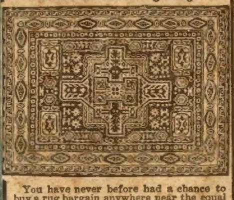
HARTMAN
Furniture & Carpet Company
3926 Wentworth Ave., Chicago, Ill.



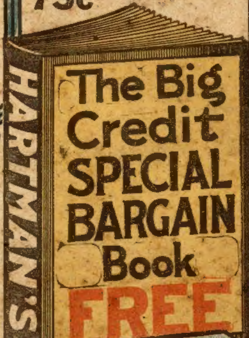
New One-Motion Collapsible Go-Cart
No. 7F513

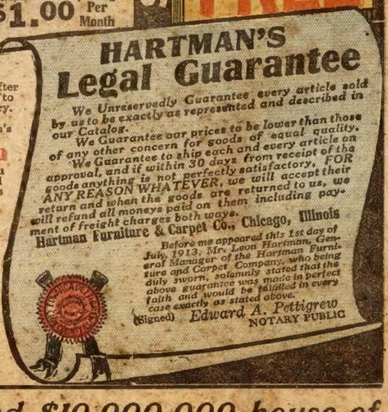
A great blessing for mother and child, easily and quickly handled. Substantially built and will never get out of order. Instantaneous motion folds cart as shown in illustration. All steel construction, covered with Imperial leather. Has 3 bow hood—soft easy seat, half inch rubber tires. Sold in retail stores at from 50 to 75 per cent more. All we ask is $5.65 **50c** Per Month

No. 0E712—Hartman's Warswick Brussels Rug Bargain



You have never before had a chance to buy a rug bargain anywhere near the equal of this exceedingly effective semi-oriental design Brussels Rug. It is standard 9 x 12 ft. size. Surface is of selected woolen yarns, closely woven into a beautiful medallion center in red with combination colorings of green, red and tan. Highly recommended and fully guaranteed **75c** Per Month Price $9.75


HARTMAN'S
The Big Credit SPECIAL BARGAIN Book FREE



HARTMAN'S
Legal Guarantee

We Unreservedly Guarantee every article sold by us to be exactly as represented and described in our Catalog.

We Guarantee our prices to be lower than those of any other concern for goods of equal quality.

We Guarantee to ship each and every article on approval, and if within 30 days from receipt of the goods anything is not perfectly satisfactory, FOR ANY REASON WHATEVER, we will accept their return and when the goods are returned to us, we will refund all moneys paid on them including payment of freight charges both ways.

Hartman Furniture & Carpet Co., Chicago, Illinois

Before me appeared this 1st day of July, 1913, Mr. Leon Hartman, General Manager of the Hartman Furniture and Carpet Company, who being duly sworn, solemnly stated that the above guarantee was made in perfect faith and would be fulfilled in every case exactly as stated above.

(Signed) *Edward A. Pettigrew*
NOTARY PUBLIC

Every statement, every claim made by this grand $10,000,000 house of Hartman will be found to be absolutely true and reliable. This company has been in business for more than 59 years and their remarkable success is sufficient proof of the satisfaction given their customers.